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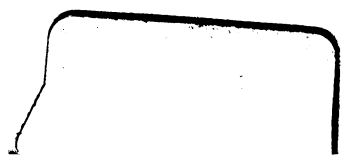
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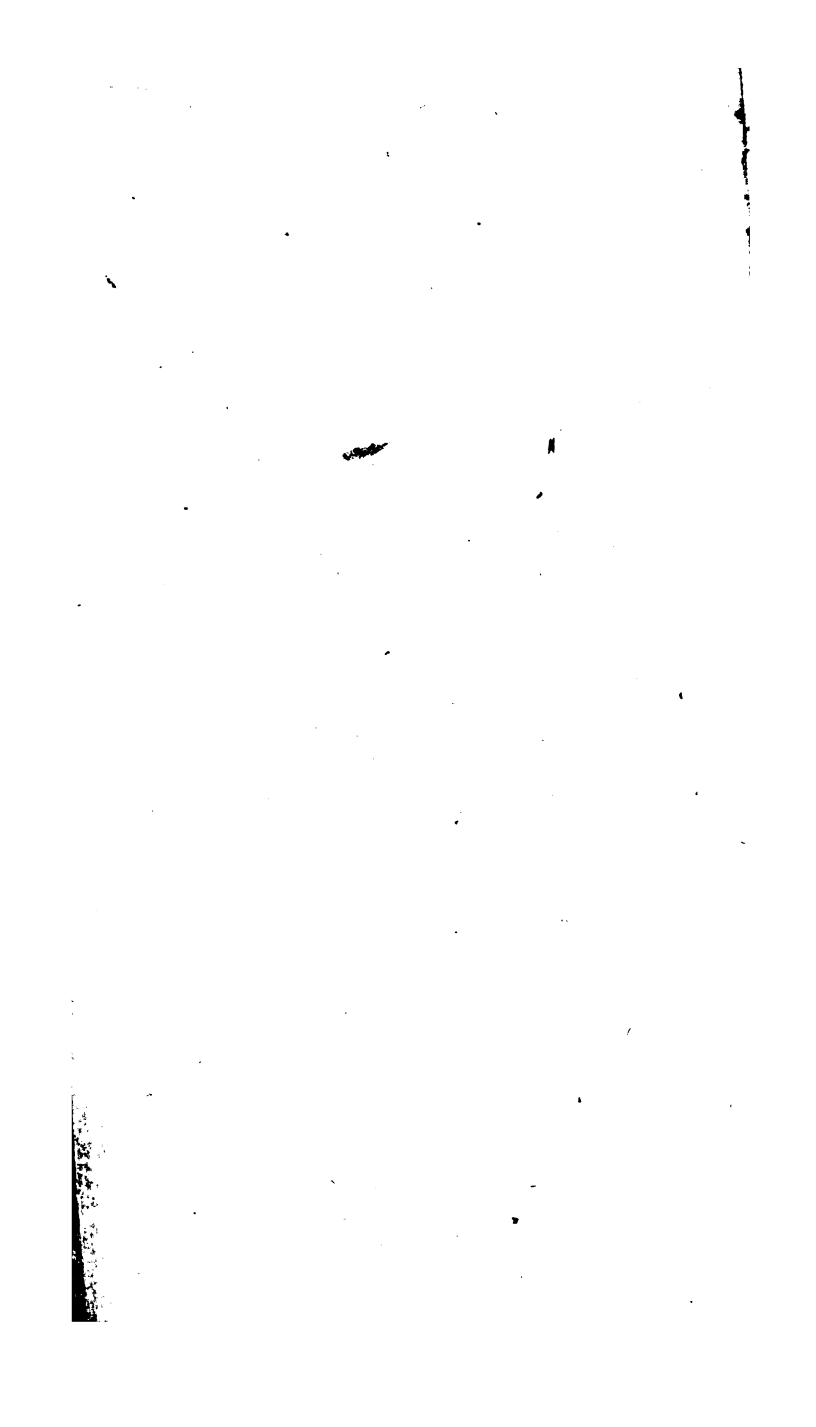
April 1st 1848

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THE
HISTORY
OF
RASSELAS,
PRINCE OF ABISSINIA.

BY SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

WITH A
LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY F. W. BLAGDON, ESQ.

To which are added,
JOHNSON'S MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

BOSTON,
PRINTED BY J. BELCHER.

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1811.

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● LIFE
OF
DR. JOHNSON.

“ ————— Sibi quivis
Speret idem : sudet multum frustra que laboret
Ausus idem.” *Horace.*

All men will try, and hope to write as well,
And not, without much pains, be undeceiv'd.
Roscommon.

SAMUEL JOHNSON was born at Litchfield, on the 7th of September, Old Style, in the year 1709. His father, Michael Johnson, was of low parentage, was a native of Cubley, in Derbyshire, and at the birth of the subject of our memoir, resided at Litchfield, and carried on the business of a country bookseller, by attending, on market-days, at all the neighbouring towns. He was nevertheless a man of much information ; was a decent classical scholar, and lived in such a state of respectability that he was made one of the magistrates of that city. His mother's name was Sarah Ford : she had descended from a respectable family in Warwickshire, and was the sister of Dr. Joseph Ford, an eminent physician, and father of Cornelius Ford, the celebrated Chaplain to Lord Chesterfield. Mrs. Johnson possessed a considerable share of understanding, and was much respected for her piety and prudence. They did not marry till they were advanced in years, and they had only another son, named Nathaniel, who after succeeding to the business of his father, died in 1737, in

the 25th year of his age. Samuel also had an uncle, named Andrew, who for some years kept the ring appropriated for boxers in Smithfield.

From an unclean nurse, or perhaps from hereditary derivation, he was afflicted with the disease called the King's Evil, and the Jacobites, which principles his father possessed, believing in the efficacy of royal contact, his mother, when he was two years old, presented him before Queen Anne, who, for the first time, performed the office of the touch, and gave to the patient all the healing virtue which she was capable of imparting. But the disease was too obstinate to yield even to more potent remedies: he was afterwards cut for the relief of that scrophulous humour, but the operation only disfigured his countenance, which was naturally harsh and rugged, impaired his hearing, and deprived him of the sight of his left eye.

Having acquired the first rudiments of education at Litchfield, under Tom Brown, the author of a spelling-book, he began at eight years of age, to learn Latin at the free-school of that city, and though he was not remarkable for diligence or application, he, in less than two years, was taken from the under-master by the head-master, Mr. Hunter, who made him a pupil of his own. Amongst his school-fellows were Dr. James, the inventor of the Fever Powder; and Mr. Lowe, Canon of Windsor.

There is no doubt that his progress under the above-mentioned gentleman was considerable, though Johnson describes him as "wrongheadedly-severe;" for at the age of fifteen he was removed to a still higher school, at Stourbridge, in Worcestershire, where he obtained a complete knowledge of classical literature. He seems to have figured there in the double capacity of usher and scholar; repaying the information he ac-

quired from the master, Mr. Wentworth, by giving instructions to the junior pupils.—He describes this gentleman as unreasonably severe ; and in his correspondence with Dr. Percy, Bishop of Dromore, he thus discriminates between his progress at each of the schools. “ At one I learnt much in the school, but little from the master ; in the other I learnt much from the master, but little in the school.”

After remaining upwards of a year at Stourbridge, he returned to his father, and when he had attained the age of nineteen, he was patronised by Mr. Andrew Corbet, a gentleman of Shropshire, who proposed to maintain him at Oxford, in the capacity of companion to his son. He was accordingly entered as a commoner of Pembroke College, in October 1728 ; but Mr. Boswell, on the authority of Dr. Taylor, asserts, that he never derived the least advantage from his patron.

His favourite studies at College were ethics, theology, and classical literature ; and though he was generally reserved in his demeanor, he frequently gave proofs of his extensive reading, by quoting in controversial conversations, such a variety of passages from obscure ancient authors, as convinced his auditors, that he possessed a memory unusually retentive.

A remarkable anecdote is related of Johnson, while at College, which strongly proves the brilliancy of his talents. The 5th of November being then kept with great solemnity, it was usual for each student to deliver in an exercise upon that subject. Johnson having neglected the performance of this duty, composed instead of it some verses, entitled *Somnium*, the subject of which was, that the muse had appeared to him in his sleep and asserted, “ that it did not become him to write on such abstruse points, but that he should confine himself to humbler themes.” The versification was considered.

to be so truly Virgilian that Mr. Jorden, his tutor, solicited him to translate Pope's *Messiah* into Latin hexameter verse, as a Christmas exercise. This task he performed with such uncommon rapidity and elegance, that he gained the applause of the whole university : and Pope is reported to have said, that "the author would leave it a question with posterity whether the Latin or the English were the original." While at College he had a great inclination for the reading of Greek : he also projected a common place-book, to the extent of six folio volumes ; but Sir John Hawkins asserts, that by far the greater portion of it consisted of blank leaves.

While at Litchfield during the college vacation he was overwhelmed with "morbid melancholy" to such a degree as to render his life miserable. He fancied himself in a state of approaching insanity, and with this idea he drew up an account of his situation in Latin, and sent it to his god-father, Dr. Swinfen, of Litchfield.—Mr. Boswell asserts, that his statement displayed not only an uncommon vigour of fancy and taste, but of judgment. From this dismal malady it appears he never after perfectly recovered.

His religious progress is of importance. He had been instructed at an early age in the doctrines of the Church of England by his mother, who used to confine him on Sundays, and make him read the "Whole Duty of Man ;" but her strictness only caused in him an inattention to religion, and in and after his fourteenth year he was a talker against it. On going to Oxford he read by chance Law's "Serious Call to the Unconverted ;" when instead of finding it a dull book, as he expected, he declares it was an overmatch for him, and became the first occasion of his thinking in earnest of religion.—Afterwards those tenets of our Church which

are most nearly allied to Calvinism were congenial to his feelings, and they were confirmed by his habits for the remainder of his life.

In the year 1730, Mr. Corbett quitted the university, and his father declined contributing any farther to Johnson's maintenance than paying for his commons; while the remittances from his own family were scanty and irregular, that he could no longer make a decent external appearance.—In short, his shoes were so much decayed, that his feet appeared through them; yet so averse was he to being considered as an object of eleemosynary contribution, that a new pair having been placed at his door by an unknown hand, he indignantly flung them away.

At this period of his distress he seemed indifferent to fame, and, according to Dr. Percy, "he might be seen lounging at the college gate, with a circle of young students, whom he was entertaining with his wit, and keeping from their studies, if not spiriting them up to rebellion against the college discipline, which in his maturer years he so much extolled."

For another year he continued to struggle under all the disadvantages of poverty; and professed a desire to practice either of the civil or common law; but his debts increasing, in consequence of his remittances from Litchfield having failed altogether by the insolvency of his father, he was compelled to quit the college in the autumn of 1731. He had resided at it little more than three years, which circumstance prevented him from obtaining a settlement, from which at a future period of his life he might have derived a subsistence.

On returning to Litchfield the knowledge of his talents procured him a kind reception in several of the most respectable families at that place.

In December 1731, his father died in the 79th year of his age ; when, after his mother was provided for, the portion of the effects which fell to his share amounted only to 20l.

He then found himself obliged to accept the situation of usher in the school of Market Bosworth, in Leicestershire, to which he travelled on foot ; he resided in the house of the patron of the school, Sir. W. Dixie, who treated him with intolerable harshness : and this situation proved the most irksome to him of any which he met with in the course of his existence.

Having relinquished this employment, he went on a visit to Mr. Hector, of Birmingham, who had been his school-fellow, and here he performed his first literary work, which was a translation from the French of "*Lobo's Voyage to Abyssinia.*" It was published in 1735, by Bettesworth and Hicks, of Paternoster-row ; and for this task Johnson received only five guineas.

In August 1734, he published proposals for printing by subscription the Latin Poems of Politian, but for want of encouragement the work never made its appearance, though it was to consist of 30 octavo sheets, for the small price of five shillings. In the same year being hardly driven to procure subsistence, he wrote under the name of S. Smith, to Mr. Cave, the proprietor of the Gentleman's Magazine, proposing, "on reasonable terms," to supply him with a variety of literary matter, never printed before. Mr. Cave answered his letter, but it does not appear that any advantage at that time resulted from it.

His juvenile attachments to the fair sex were various and transient. He paid his addresses while at Stourbridge school, to Miss Olivia Lloyd, a young Quaker ; and next to Lucy Porter, whose mother he married in 1735. Mrs. P. was the widow of Mr. Porter, a mer-

cer, of Birmingham. It was a love match to both sides, inspired not by the beauty of form, but by a mutual admiration of each other's minds. Johnson's appearance was certainly very forbidding, as, at that time, he was lean and tall, and the scars of the scrophula made his physiognomy hideous. Mrs. Porter was double his age, was very corpulent, had an uncommonly large bosom ; and according to Garrick, "she had florid red cheeks, produced by thick painting, and a liberal use of cordials." She was worth about 800*l.* which rendered her to a man in Johnson's circumstances, a desirable acquisition. He immediately hired a large house at Edial, near Litchfield, set up a private classical academy, and advertised for scholars ; but the plan proved abortive, for the only pupils he acquired were the celebrated Garrick, then about 18, his brother George, and a Mr. Offely, who died before he had completed his studies.

About this time he commenced his tragedy of *Irene* ; and in the spring of 1737, he resolved to try his fortune in London, being then in the 28th year of his age. Young Garrick came to town at the same time, with the intention of studying the profession of the law. Johnson, on his arrival, was much reduced in his circumstances, and was obliged to practise the most rigid economy. He took lodgings in Exeter-street, where a poor Irish painter initiated him in the art of living cheaply, and whose true character he afterwards drew, under the title of *Ofellens*, in the "*Art of Living in London*." In the course of this year he was introduced to Mr. Cave, who was his patron, and for many years his principal resource for employment. . He also at this period commenced his intimacy with the well-known Richard Savage.

The misfortunes and misconduct of Savage had, at this period, reduced him to the lowest state of indigence, and his only means of subsistence was by writing for the "*Gentleman's Magazine*," by which Johnson became acquainted with him; and being both equally destitute, they sympathized in each other's sufferings. It is a melancholy truth, that they were often so extremely poor as not to be able to pay for a lodging, and were consequently obliged to traverse the streets for whole nights together.

In May 1738, he published his excellent Poem called "*London*," written in imitation of the third Satire of Juvenal. He offered it to several booksellers, none of whom would purchase it; but at last, through the interest of Mr. Cave, Mr. Dodsley, bought it of him for 10*l*. Pope highly admired this Poem, and prophesied the author's future fame.—It went through a second edition in the space of a week.

But the trade of writing was upon the whole so unprofitable, that Johnson made an effort to procure the situation of master of the free-school at Appleby, Leicestershire, the salary of which was 60*l*. a year. Pope exerted himself greatly to procure him this situation; but his project miscarried, and our author was again thrown back upon the metropolis, where he continued his drudgery in the service of Cave, and produced a number of small tracts with astonishing rapidity. He composed the Parliamentary Speeches for the Magazines, wrote a variety of Prefaces for different works; and in 1743, he was employed in making a catalogue of the Earl of Oxford's library, and in compiling the "*Harleian Miscellany*." In the same year he published his excellent "*Life of Savage*," which was alone sufficient to establish his reputation. Yet on projecting soon afterwards a new edition of Shakespeare, he could find

no friend to promote the subscription, and was obliged to abandon the project. Sir John Hawkins preserved a list of his schemes, thirty-nine of which he had formed in the course of his studies, but such was his want of encouragement that not one of them was ever executed.

In 1747, however, he published his "*Plan of a Dictionary of the English Language*," and addressed it to the celebrated Earl of Chesterfield; when several opulent booksellers having meditated a book of a similar kind, they agreed with Johnson to execute it, and the price stipulated was 1575l. The proprietors were Mr. Charles Hitch, Mr. Andrew Millar, Mr. Dodsley, the two Messrs. Longman, and the two Messrs. Knapton. Johnson had hitherto lived with his wife in obscure courts and alleys about the Strand; but in order to execute this arduous undertaking, he hired a house in Gough-square, fitted up one of the upper rooms like a counting-house, and employed there six amanuenses in transcribing, five of whom were Scotchmen.

In February 1749, he finished his tragedy, of Irene, and the theatre being then under the direction of Garrick, he had sufficient interest to get it put in rehearsal; during which, to attract the public attention to his name, he published the "*Vanity of Human Wishes*," of which poem he is said to have composed 70 lines in one day, without putting one of them upon paper till they were finished. For this poem, which is highly esteemed, he received from Dodsley only fifteen guineas.

His tragedy was produced on the 6th of February, 1749, after a serious dispute between him and the manager, with respect to some alterations which the author refused to make, though he at last conceded. Dr. Adams, who was present on the first night of its representation, gave Mr. Boswell the following account of its reception. "Before the curtain drew up, there were

catcalls whistling, which alarmed Johnson's friends. The Prologue, which was written by himself in a manly strain, soothed the audience, and the play went off tolerably till it came to the conclusion, when Mrs. Pritchard, the heroine of the piece, was to be strangled upon the stage, and was to speak two lines with the bow-string round her neck. The audience cried out, Murder! murder! She several times attempted to speak, but in vain. At last she was obliged to go off the stage alive." Irene was represented on the twelve following nights, and the heroine was carried off to be put to death behind the scenes: but since that time it has never been acted on any stage; and Johnson, from the unfavourable decision upon his tragedy, being convinced that his talents were not sufficient to allow him to write successfully for the stage, never afterwards made any attempt at dramatic composition.

It was towards the close of this year that Lauder published his essay on "Milton's Use and Imitations of the Moderns," in which he pretended that he had detected a multitude of plagiarisms in that author; Johnson, it appears, from motives of enmity to the memory of Milton, at first assisted Lauder, but the imposition being detected by Dr. Douglas, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, he insisted on the imposter confessing his offence; and he at length signed a recantation, which was published in 1751. Johnson then abandoned him; when after having the folly and wickedness to deny his apology, he went to Barbadoes, where he died.

While he was employed in his Dictionary, he projected the Rambler, which first made its appearance on the 20th of March, 1750, and was continued regularly every Tuesday and Friday till the 17th of March, 1752, when it was stopped.—In this publication he received little assistance, it having been all written by himself,

except five numbers : these were No. 10, by Mrs. Chappone ; No. 30, by Mrs. Talbot ; No. 97, by Richardson ; and Nos. 44 and 100, by Miss Carter.

About this period Johnson's circumstances were far from easy ; yet he received as a constant visitor at his house Miss Anna Williams, the daughter of a Welch physician, who possessed considerable literary talents, and had just lost her sight. Having been intimate with his wife, Johnson insisted on her retaining an apartment in his house, and Garrick in 1755 gave her a benefit, which produced 200*l*. In 1766 she published a volume of miscellanies in quarto, by which she increased her stock to 300*l*. and this little fund, with the assistance of Johnson, supported her during the remainder of her life.

Soon after he had finished the "*Rambler*," he experienced a loss which afflicted him in the most sensible manner. On the 17th of March, O. S. his wife died, after a cohabitation of 17 years. She was buried in the chapel of Bromley, which was under the care of his friend Dr. Hawkesworth ; and the poignant distress of Johnson in consequence of this event is said to have been indescribable. She left by her first husband, a daughter, who has been already mentioned, and a son who was a Captain in the navy, and who at his death left his sister 10,000*l*.

In May 1752, preparatory to his relinquishment of mourning, he composed a prayer for the repose of his wife, and resumed his literary labours on the Dictionary, though he occasionally assisted Dr. Hawkesworth, in his publication of the *Adventurer*, which was commenced on the 7th of November, 1752, and continued twice a week, till March the 9th, 1754. Thornton, who assisted him in the beginning, soon withdrew, and set up a new paper, called the *Connoisseur*.

His early patron, Mr. Cave, died in January, 1754, and Johnson shewed his gratitude by writing his life, which was published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. His Dictionary was also finished towards the end of this year, and made its appearance in 1756 — Previous to its publication, the University of Oxford, anticipating the excellence of the work, and at the solicitation of his friend Mr. Warton, unanimously conferred upon him the degree of Master of Arts, which, though it had been refused to him at a former period, was considered as an honour by that establishment.

In this year he assisted Mr. Zacharia Williams, father of the blind lady lately mentioned, by writing for him the account of his attempts to ascertain the Longitude. He had vainly hoped to receive a reward from Parliament for his exertions, but failing in his expectation, he died shortly afterwards, in the 63d year of his age.

During the progress of his Dictionary, Johnson having spent the money for which he had contracted to write it, was again under the necessity of exerting his talents in order to procure the means of subsistence. His principal resources now were the subscriptions for his edition of Shakspeare, and the profits of his miscellaneous writings, which, however, were not sufficient to secure him from an arrest for the trifling sum of 5l. 18s. a debt which Richardson sent him the money to discharge.

His mind having been long oppressed by constant exertion, seemed now to require an interval of repose : —but indolence to him was dangerous, for when his spirits were not actively employed, they turned with hostility against him, and he nearly sunk under the pressure of his melancholy indisposition. He always reflected with severity upon his own life and conduct, and

wishing to be immaculate he destroyed his peace by unnecessary scruples. He observes, that on surveying his own life, he could discover nothing but a barren waste of time, with some disorders of body and disturbances of mind, very nearly allied to madness; that his life from his earliest years, was wasted in a morning-bed, and his prevailing sin was a general sluggishness, to which he had always been inclined; and in part of his life almost compelled, by the attacks of his never-failing disease, and the consequent weariness of his mental faculties. Indeed it appears that from the time of his consultation with Dr. Swinfen, already alluded to, he was never free from an apprehension of the worst calamity with which human nature can be afflicted, and which, like the sword of the tyrant suspended over his guest, kept him for the remainder of his life in a state of the most dreadful suspense.

In 1756, he undertook to superintend and contribute largely to a monthly publication, entitled, *The Literary Magazine, and Universal Review*; and he wrote for it without intermission till the fifteenth number; during which time he was drawn into several controversies, by the severity of his criticisms. In the same year he issued proposals of considerable length for his edition of *Shakspeare*, with notes; and his anticipated activity was so great, that he promised the work should be completed by Christmas, 1757, though it did not make its appearance till seven years after that period.

In 1757 it does not appear that he wrote any thing of consequence; but on the 15th of April, 1758, he began the *Idler*, which appeared every Saturday, in a weekly newspaper, called, *The Universal Chronicle*. The essays were 103 in number, of which twelve only were contributed by his friends. Of these, numbers 33, 93, and 96, were written by Mr. Warton, number 67 by

LIFE OF DR. JOHNSON.

r. Langton, and number 76, 79, and 82, by Sir Joshua Reynolds. When the Idler was completed Johnson added the Essay on Epitaphs, the Dissertation on Pope, and an Essay on the Bravery of the English common soldiers. The Idler is allowed to possess more variety of real life, and greater facility of language, but less body and spirit, than the Rambler.

In January 1759, his mother died at the advance of 90. He had not seen her for many years prior to her last illness, though he had often impoverished himself to contribute to her support.—When he learned of her confinement, he was anxious to repair to London to pay her the last offices of his filial duty, but had no money to defray his carriage; he therefore finished his tale of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia, for which Mr. Johnson, the bookseller, very liberally gave 100*l*. With this supply he set off, but did not arrive in time to close the eyes of his beloved parent. He told Sir Joshua Reynolds, that he completed Rasselas in the evenings of one week, sent it to the press in portions as it was written, and never afterwards read it. When it passed through a second edition, Mr. Johnson made him a present of an additional copy.

When he was engaged upon the Idler, he found it necessary to retrench his expenses, and quit his house in Gough-square, he retired first to Gray's Inn and afterwards to Inner Temple Lane, "where he lived;" says Mr. Murphy, "in poverty, total abstinence, and the pride of literature." Mr. Fitzherbert, father of Lord St. Helens, used to say, that he never paid him a morning visit at his chambers, in order to send a letter to the city, but he found this profession without pen, ink, or paper.—In 1760, however, his fortune suddenly changed, and enabled him to struggle against the inconvenience

rious subsistence. The King granted him a pension of 300*l.* per annum, as a recompense for the excellence of his writings and the benefit of their moral tendency.

Being now possessed of a comparative independency, he left the Temple, took a house in Johnson's court, Fleet-street, and formed a new weekly club, amongst the members of which were Mr. Edmund Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and other distinguished characters. He also formed a connexion in 1763 with Mr. Boswell, and continued to live with him in the greatest intimacy for the remainder of his life. In 1765, while enjoying his comfortable state of independence, he met with another resource, which contributed more than any other circumstance to exempt him from the solitudes of life :—he was introduced to the family of the late Mr. Thrale.

He published his Shakspeare in 1765, and shortly after the University of Dublin created him a Doctor of Laws : the University of Oxford followed the example ten years afterwards, and till that period he never assumed his title. In 1766 his constitution seemed to be in a rapid decline, and the morbid melancholy to which he had always been a victim, then came upon him with redoubled force. About this time Mr. and Mrs. Thrale paid him a visit, and found him on his knees with Dr. Delap, beseeching God to continue him in the use of his understanding.

From 1766, till the year 1775, we find him engaged in no very material literary avocations. He was much in the habit of writing *Prefaces* and *Introductions* to the works of various authors. He passed much of his time at Streatham, the residence of Mr. Thrale ; and in 1776 he removed to a larger house in Bolt-court, where the whole of the second floor was fitted up for his library, which now consisted of 5000 volumes. Miss Wil-

liams partook of his new mansion ; and he also gave apartments to Mrs. Desmoulins, daughter of his godfather, Dr. Swinfen, and her daughter, a Miss Carmichael. Such likewise was his generosity, that he allowed Mrs. Desmoulins half a guinea a week out of his pension.—Yet Johnson used to observe to Mrs. Piozzi, that from the dissensions of his inmates they made his life miserable, by the impossibility he found of making their's happy.

Amongst the constant visitors of Dr. Johnson was Robert Levett, an obscure practitioner of medicine.—He had scarcely sufficient practice to keep him from starving : but Johnson had such a high opinion of his abilities that he always consulted him, and declared “ he was hardly able to live without him.” He also gave this man an apartment in his house, in which he continued for the rest of his life. The figure and manner of Levett exactly resembled those of Johnson ; and when nearly sixty years of age he married a common street-walker, who persuaded him that she was a woman of family and fortune.—This man was highly remarkable for the tenderness and gratitude which he always shewed towards his benefactor.

In August 1773, he set out on his journey to Scotland, in company with Mr. Boswell, and returned to London in November. His various adventures during his tour have been well described by Mr. Boswell in his journal. In 1774, he published a political pamphlet, entitled, *The Patriot* : and in 1775, another, called, *Taxation no Tyranny* ; as well as the *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*. His first publication of the *Lives of the Poets* was in 1779, and in 1781 he completed this work, which in his seventy-first year, closed his literary labours. It was this work which contributed to immortalize his name, and procured him

that rational esteem which was not diminished even by the injudicious zeal of his friends.

On the 4th of May, 1781, he lost his valuable friend, Mr. Thrale, who appointed him one of his executors, with a legacy of 200*l*. He has given a true character of this gentleman in a Latin Epitaph, which is to be seen in the church at Streatham. By the loss of Mr. Thrale, Johnson was deprived of many of the comforts of his life; and his visits becoming less agreeable at Streatham, he took his final leave of Mrs. Thrale in April 1783, after a connexion of nearly twenty years. It appears from the anecdotes of Mrs. Piozzi, (formerly Mrs. Thrale,) that her politeness to Johnson was principally in consequence of an habitual yoke imposed upon her by her husband. "Veneration," says she, "for his virtues, reverence for his talents, and an habitual endurance of which my husband bore his share for seventeen years, made me go on so long with Mr. Johnson; but the perpetual confinement I will own to have been terrifying in the first years of our friendship, and irksome in the last, nor would I pretend to support it when my coadjutor was no more." Previous to her marriage with the Italian music-master, Johnson sent her a severe remonstrance, on her intimation of her intentions, which she answered by an indignant vindication of her conduct.

From this time the malady with which Johnson had been afflicted throughout his life, came upon him with redoubled violence, and his strength daily declined. In June 1783, he was afflicted with a paralytic stroke, which deprived him at first of his speech, but which he gradually recovered, so that in July he was able to pay a visit to Mr. Langton, at Rochester. He afterwards went to Mr. Bowles, at Heale, in Wiltshire, and during his visit Miss Williams expired. This, as he was ever agitated with the dread of his own dissolution, gave his

mind a considerable shock ; and he declared that his prospect of death was terrible.

In November 1783, he was attacked by a dropsy, in consequence of which he was swelled from head to foot : from this complaint however, he was relieved, and began to entertain hopes that his constitution was not entirely decayed. At Midsummer 1784, he seemed in a state of convalescence, and went into Derbyshire to recover his strength by a change of air. During his absence he conceived that his life might be prolonged by his removal to a warmer climate, and the Lord Chancellor undertook to recommend his case, with a view to obtain an addition to his pension, but he was unsuccessful, and though he offered to advance 500*l.* towards his travelling expenses, from his own private purse, and Dr. Brocklesby also offered him an annuity of 100*l.* the Doctor thought proper to reject both these liberal proposals, and returned to London in November, seriously afflicted with an asthma and the dropsy.

He now felt his end approaching : and the strength of religion prevailed over the infirmity of nature. He no longer dreaded the sentence of divine justice, but maintained a humble and pious hope of mercy. On the evening of Monday, December 13, 1784, he expired without a groan : and on the 20th his remains were deposited in Westminster Abbey, near the foot of Shakespeare's monument, and contiguous to the grave of Garrick. His school-fellow and friend, Dr. Taylor, read the funeral service, and agreeably to his desire, a large blue flag stone was placed over his grave, with the following inscription :

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.

Obiit XIII. Decembris,

Anno Domini

M.DCC.LXXXIV.

Ætatis suæ LXXV.

A monument has since been erected to his memory in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul. He left the bulk of his property, amounting to about 1500*l.* to his faithful black servant, Francis Barber, and appointed Sir John Hawkins and Sir William Scott, his executors.

The death of Dr. Johnson excited the attention of the publick in an extraordinary degree, and the press teemed with literary effusions to his memory, in the forms of Sermons, Elegies, Memoirs, Lives, Essays, and Anecdotes. Those most distinguished were the Essay by Samuel Hobhouse, Esq. and the "Political and Literary Review of Dr. Johnson's Character," by John Courtenay, Esq. M. P. but particularly the instructing and interesting Life of Johnson, by James Boswell, Esq. which appeared in two quarto volumes in the year 1791.

The person of Dr. Johnson was large and unwieldy; the disease of the scrophula affected his nerves, and his head and frame were subject to involuntary motions. He manifested on all occasions an independent spirit, which rendered him incessantly irritable, and carried his haughty temper on many occasions beyond all bounds; while the habit of pronouncing decisions to friends and visitors, caused him to adopt a dictatorial manner, which was much enforced by a voice naturally loud and strong. His favourite topics of discussion were metaphysicks, moral and religious systems, literary anecdotes, but particularly biographical accounts of learned men. He however had an aversion from General History and Antiquities, and would even be rude to the person who introduced those subjects in conversation.

There is no doubt that the great trait in Johnson's mind was gigantick vigour. He was born a logician, and loved argumentation, while he argued with such profound investigation that a fallacy was sure to be refuted

by his strength of reasoning. It is also certain that with great powers of mind he possessed a considerable share of wit and humour ; though he does not seem to have been able in conversation to command his passions.

In his political principles he was a staunch Tory, and was inimical to all men of Whig opinions, though the shades of his character have been greatly misrepresented by party-writers.—His humanity, generosity, and general philanthropy were unbounded ; and it has been justly observed, that in his house the lame, the blind, and the sorrowful found a sure retreat. He always considered a strict adherence to truth as a sacred obligation, and in relating the most trivial anecdote he would not allow himself the smallest addition in the way of embellishment. In short, his veracity was so rigid that Mr. Tyers, who was well acquainted with his manner, was accustomed to observe that he conversed as if he was talking upon oath.

Dr. Johnson's failings, when contrasted with his virtues sink into insignificance, and may be compared to specks on the sun.—His piety and goodness of heart form a noble subject for imitation, his works will always remain a monument of genius and erudition ; and by a diligent attention to them every mind may advance in virtue.

We shall conclude this sketch by a quotation from Horace, which may be considered as Johnson's picture in miniature.

*"Iracundior est paulo minus aptus acutis
Naribus horum hominum, rideri possit eo quod
Rusticius tonso toga defluit, et male laxus
In pede calceus hæret. At est bonus ut melior vir
Non alius quisquam ; at tibi amicus, at ingenium ingens
Inculto latet hoc sub corpore.—"*





**THE
HISTORY
OF
RASSELAS,
PRINCE OF ABISSINIA.**

This work was published in March or April, 1759. Dr. JOHNSON wrote it in order to defray the expenses of his mother's funeral, and pay some little debts which she had left. He told Sir Joshua Reynolds that he composed it in the evenings of one week, sent it to the press in portions as it was written, and had never since read it over. Mr. Strahan, Mr. Johnston, and Mr. Dodsley, purchased it for a hundred pounds, but afterwards paid him twenty-five pounds more, when it came to a second edition. None of his writings has been so extensively diffused over Europe: for it has been translated into most, if not all, of the modern languages.

BOSWELL.

THE
HISTORY
OF
RASSELAS,
PRINCE OF ABISSINIA.

CHAPTER I.

DESCRIPTION OF A PALACE IN A VALLEY.

YE who listen with credulity to the whispers of fancy, and pursue with eagerness the phantoms of hope ; who expect that age will perform the promises of youth, and that the deficiencies of the present day will be supplied by the morrow ; attend to the history of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia.

Rasselas was the fourth son of the mighty emperor, in whose dominions the Father of Waters begins his course : whose bounty pours down the streams of plenty, and scatters over half the world the harvests of Egypt.

According to the custom which has descended from age to age among the monarchs of the torrid zone, Rasselas was confined in a private palace, with the other sons and daughters of Abissinian royalty, till the order of succession should call him to the throne.

The place which the wisdom or policy of antiquity had destined for the residence of the Abissinian princes, was a spacious valley in the kingdom Amhara, surrounded on every side by mountains, of which the

summits overhang the middle part. The only passage, by which it could be entered, was a cavern that passed under a rock, of which it has been long disputed whether it was the work of nature or of human industry. The outlet of the cavern was concealed by thick wood, and the mouth which opened into the valley was closed with gates of iron, forged by the artificers of ancient days, so massy that no man could without the help of engines open or shut them.

From the mountains on every side, rivulets descended that filled all the valley with verdure and fertility, and formed a lake in the middle inhabited by fish of every species, and frequented by every fowl whom nature has taught to dip the wing in water. This lake discharged its superfluities by a stream which entered a dark cleft of the mountain on the northern side, and fell with dreadful noise from precipice to precipice till it was heard no more.

The sides of the mountains were covered with trees, the banks of the brooks were diversified with flowers; every blast shook spices from the rocks, and every month dropped fruits upon the ground. All animals that bite the grass, or browse the shrub, whether wild or tame, wandered in this extensive circuit, secured from beasts of prey by the mountains which confined them. On one part were flocks and herds feeding in the pastures, on another all the beasts of chase frisking in the lawns; the sprightly kid was bounding on the rocks, the subtle monkey frolicking in the trees, and the solemn elephant reposing in the shade. All the diversities of the world were brought together, blessings of nature were collected, and its evils excluded.

The valley wide and fruitful, supplied its inhabitants with the necessities of life; and all delights

perfluities were added at the annual visit which the emperor paid his children, when the iron gate was opened to the sound of musick ; and during eight days every one that resided in the valley was required to propose whatever might contribute to make seclusion pleasant, to fill up vacancies of attention, and lessen the tediousness of time. Every desire was immediately granted. All the artificers of pleasure were called to gladden the festivity ; the musicians exerted the power of harmony, and the dancers shewed their activity before the princes, in hope that they should pass their lives in this blissful captivity, to which those only were admitted whose performance was thought able to add novelty to luxury. Such was the appearance of security and delight which this retirement afforded, that they, to whom it was new, always desired that it might be perpetual ; and as those, on whom the iron gate had once closed, were never suffered to return, the effect of long experience could not be known. Thus every year produced new schemes of delight, and new competitors for imprisonment.

The palace stood on an eminence raised about thirty paces above the surface of the lake. It was divided into many squares or courts, built with greater or less magnificence, according to the rank of those for whom they were designed. The roofs were turned into arches of massy stone, joined by a cement that grew harder by time, and the building stood from century to century deriding the solstitial rains and equinoctial hurricanes, without need of reparation.

This house, which was so large as to be fully known to none but some ancient officers who successively inherited the secrets of the place, was built as if suspicion herself had dictated the plan. To every room there was an open and secret passage, every square

had a communication with the rest, either from the upper stories by private galleries, or by the subterranean passages from the lower apartments. Many of the columns had unsuspected cavities, in which a long race of monarchs had repositied their treasures. They then closed up the opening with marble, which was never to be removed but in the utmost exigencies of the kingdom; and concealed their accumulations in a book which was itself concealed in a tower not entered but by the emperor, attended by the prince who stood next in succession.

CHAP. II.

THE DISCONTENT OF RASSELAS IN THE HAPPY VALLEY.

HERE the sons and daughters of Abissinia lived only to know the soft vicissitudes of pleasure and repose, attended by all that were skilful to delight, and gratified with whatever the senses can enjoy. They wandered in gardens of fragrance, and slept in the fortresses of security. Every art was practised to make them pleased with their own condition. The sages who instructed them, told them of nothing but the miseries of public life, and described all beyond the mountains as regions of calamity, where discord was always raging, and where man preyed upon man.

To heighten their opinion of their own felicity, they were daily entertained with songs, the subject of which was the *happy valley*. Their appetites were excited by frequent enumerations of different enjoyments, and revelry and merriment was the business of every hour from the dawn of morning to the close of even.

These methods were generally successful; few of the princes had ever wished to enlarge their bounds,

but passed their lives in full conviction that they had all within their reach that art or nature could bestow, and pitied those whom fate had excluded from this seat of tranquillity, as the sport of chance and the slaves of misery.

Thus they rose in the morning and lay down at night, pleased with each other and with themselves, all but Rasselas, who in the twenty-sixth year of his age began to withdraw himself from their pastimes and assemblies, and to delight in solitary walks and silent meditation. He often sat before tables covered with luxury, and forgot to taste the dainties that were placed before him: he rose abruptly in the midst of the song, and hastily retired beyond the sound of musick. His attendants observed the change, and endeavoured to renew his love of pleasure: he neglected their officiousness, repulsed their invitations, and spent day after day on the banks of rivulets sheltered with trees, where he sometimes listened to the birds in the branches, sometimes observed the fish playing in the stream, and anon cast his eyes upon the pastures and mountains filled with animals, of which some were biting the herbage, and some sleeping among the bushes.

This singularity of his humour made him much observed. One of the Sages in whose conversation he had formerly delighted, followed him secretly, in hope of discovering the cause of his disquiet. Rasselas, who knew not that any one was near him, having for some time fixed his eyes upon the goats that were browsing among the rocks, began to compare their condition with his own.

"What," said he, "makes the difference between man and all the rest of the animal creation? Every beast that strays beside me has the same corporal necessities with myself; he is hungry and crops the

grass, he is thirsty and drinks the stream, his thirst and hunger are appeased, he is satisfied and sleeps : he rises again and is hungry, he is again fed and is at rest. I am hungry and thirsty like him, but when thirst and hunger cease I am not at rest ; I am, like him, pained with want, but am not, like him, satisfied with fulness. The intermediate hours are tedious and gloomy : I long again to be hungry that I may again quicken my attention. The birds peck the berries or the corn, and fly away to the groves, where they sit in seeming happiness on the branches, and waste their lives in tuning one unvaried series of sounds. I likewise can call the lutanist and the singer, but the sounds that pleased me yesterday weary me to-day, and will grow yet more wearisome to-morrow. I can discover within me no power of perception which is not glutted with its proper pleasure, yet I do not find myself delighted. Man surely has some latent sense for which this place affords no gratification, or he has some desires distinct from sense, which must be satisfied before he can be happy."

After this he lifted up his head, and seeing the moon rising, walked towards the palace. As he passed through the fields, and saw the animals around him, "Ye," said he, "are happy, and need not envy me that walk thus among you, burdened with myself ; nor do I, ye gentle beings envy your felicity ; for it is not the felicity of man. I have many distresses from which ye are free ; I fear pain when I do not feel it ; I sometimes shrink at evils recollected, and sometimes start at evils anticipated ; surely the equity of Providence has balanced peculiar sufferings with peculiar enjoyments."

With observations like these the prince amused himself as he returned, uttering them with a plaintive

voice, yet with a look that discovered him to feel some complacency in his own perspicacity, and to receive some solace of the miseries of life, from consciousness of the delicacy with which he felt, and the eloquence with which he bewailed them. He mingled cheerfully in the diversions of the evening, and all rejoiced to find that his heart was lightened.

CHAP. III.

THE WANTS OF HIM THAT WANTS NOTHING.

On the next day his old instructor, imagining that he had now made himself acquainted with his disease of mind, was in hope of curing it by counsel, and officiously sought an opportunity of conference, which the prince, having long considered him as one whose intellects were exhausted, was not very willing to afford: "Why," said he, "does this man obtrude upon me; shall I be never suffered to forget those lectures which pleased only while they were new, and to become new again must be forgotten?" He then walked in the wood, and composed himself to his usual meditations; when before his thoughts had taken any settled form, he perceived his pursuer at his side, and was at first prompted by his impatience to go hastily away; but being unwilling to offend a man whom he had once revered and still loved, he invited him to sit down with him on the bank.

The old man thus encouraged, began to lament the change which had been lately observed in the prince, and to inquire why he so often retired from the pleasures of the palace, to loneliness and silence. "I fly from pleasure," said the prince, "because pleasure has ceased to please; I am lonely because I am miserable, and am unwilling to cloud with my presence the hap-

piness of others." "You, Sir," said the sage, "are the first who has complained of misery in the *happy valley*. I hope to convince you that your complaints have no real cause. You are here in full possession of all that the emperour of Abissinia can bestow ; here is neither labour to be endured nor danger to be dreaded, yet here is all that labour or danger can procure or purchase. Look round and tell me which of your wants is without supply : if you want nothing, how are you unhappy ?"

"That I want nothing," said the prince, "or that I know not what I want, is the cause of my complaint ; if I had any known want, I should have a certain wish ; that wish would excite endeavour, and I should not then repine to see the sun move so slowly towards the western mountain, or lament when the day breaks and sleep will no longer hide me from myself. When I see the kids and the lambs chasing one another, I fancy that I should be happy if I had something to pursue. But, possessing all that I can want, I find one day and one hour exactly like another, except that the latter is still more tedious than the former. Let your experience inform me how the day may now seem as short as in my childhood, while nature was yet fresh, and every moment showed me what I never had observed before. I have already enjoyed too much ; give me something to desire."

The old man was surprised at this new species of affliction, and knew not what to reply, yet was unwilling to be silent. "Sir," said he, "if you had seen the miseries of the world, you would know how to value your present state." "Now," said the prince, "you have given me something to desire ; I shall long to see the miseries of the world, since the sight of them is necessary to happiness."

CHAP. IV.

THE PRINCE CONTINUES NO GRIEVE AND MUSE.

AT this time the sound of musick proclaimed the hour of repast, and the conversation was concluded. The old man went away sufficiently discontented, to find that his reasonings had produced the only conclusion which they were intended to prevent. But in the decline of life shame and grief are of short duration; whether it be that we bear easily what we have borne long, or that, finding ourselves in age less regarded, we less regard others; or, that we look with slight regard upon afflictions, to which we know that the hand of death is about to put an end.

The prince, whose views were extended to a wider space, could not speedily quiet his emotions. He had been before terrified at the length of life which nature promised him, because he considered that in a long time much must be endured; he now rejoiced in his youth, because in many years much might be done.

This first beam of hope, that had been ever darted into his mind, rekindled youth in his cheeks, and doubled the lustre of his eyes. He was fired with the desire of doing something though he knew not yet with distinctness, either ends or means.

He was now no longer gloomy and unsocial; but, considering himself as master of a secret stock of happiness, which he could enjoy only by concealing it, he affected to be busy in all schemes of diversion, and endeavoured to make others pleased with the state of which he himself was weary. But pleasures never can be so multiplied or continued, as not to leave much of

life unemployed ; there were many hours, both of the night and day, which he could spend without suspicion in solitary thought. The load of life was much lightened ; he went eagerly into the assemblies, because he supposed the frequency of his presence necessary to the success of his purposes ; he retired gladly to privacy, because he had now a subject of thought.

His chief amusement was to picture to himself that world which he had never seen ; to place himself in various conditions ; to be entangled in imaginary difficulties, and to be engaged in wild adventures ; but his benevolence always terminated his projects in the relief of distress, the detection of fraud, the defeat of oppression, and the diffusion of happiness.

Thus passed twenty months of the life of Rasselas. He busied himself so intensely in visionary bustle, that he forgot his real solitude, and, amidst hourly preparations for the various incidents of human affairs, neglected to consider by what means he should mingle with mankind.

One day as he was sitting on a bank, he feigned to himself an orphan virgin robbed of her little portion by a treacherous lover, and crying after him for restitution and redress. So strongly was the image impressed upon his mind, that he started up in the maid's defence, and ran forward to seize the plunderer with all the eagerness of real pursuit. Fear naturally quickens the flight of guilt. Rasselas could not catch the fugitive with his utmost efforts ; but resolving to weary by perseverance, him whom he could not surpass in speed, he pressed on till the foot of the mountain stopped his course.

Here he recollected himself, and smiled at his own useless impetuosity. Then raising his eyes to the mountain, "This" said he, "is the fatal obstacle that

hinders at once the enjoyment of pleasure, and the exercise of virtue. How long is it that my hopes and wishes have flown beyond this boundary of my life, which yet I never have attempted to surmount !

Struck with this reflection, he sat down to muse ; and remembered, that since he first resolved to escape from his confinement, the sun had passed twice over him in his annual course. He now felt a degree of regret with which he had never been before acquainted. He considered how much might have been done in the time which had passed, and left nothing real behind it. He compared twenty months with the life of man. " In life," said he, " is not to be counted the ignorance of infancy, or imbecility of age. We are long before we are able to think, and we soon cease from the power of acting. The true period of human existence may be reasonably estimated at forty years, of which I have mused away the four and twentieth part. What I have lost was certain, for I have certainly possessed it ! but of twenty months to come who can assure me ?

The consciousness of his own folly pierced him deeply, and he was long before he could be reconciled to himself. " The rest of my time," said he, " has been lost by the crime or folly of my ancestors, and the absurd institutions of my country ; I remembered it with disgust, yet without remorse ; but the months that have passed since new light darted into my soul, since I formed a scheme of reasonable felicity, have been squandered by my own fault. I have lost that which can never be restored : I have seen the sun rise and set for twenty months, an idle gazer on the light of heaven : In this time the birds have left the nest of their mother, and committed themselves to the woods and to the skies : the kid has forsaken the teat and learned by degrees to climb the rocks in quest of independent

sustenance. I only have made no advances, but am still helpless and ignorant. The moon, by more than twenty changes, admonished me of the flux of life; the stream that rolled before my feet upbraided my inactivity. I sat feasting on intellectual luxury, regardless alike of the examples of the earth, and the instructions of the planets. Twenty months are passed, who shall restore them?"

These sorrowful meditations fastened upon his mind; he passed four months in resolving to lose no more time in idle resolves, and was awakened to more vigorous exertion, by hearing a maid, who had broken a porcelain cup, remark, that what cannot be repaired is not to be regretted.

This was obvious; and Rasselas reproached himself that he had not discovered it, having not known, or not considered, how many useful hints are obtained by chance, and how often the mind, hurried by her own ardour to distant views, neglects the truths that lie open before her. He for a few hours regretted his regret, and from that time bent his whole mind upon the means of escaping from the valley of happiness.

CHAP. V.

THE PRINCE MEDITATES HIS ESCAPE.

HE now found that it would be very difficult to effect that which it was very easy to suppose effected. When he looked round about him, he saw himself confined by the bars of nature which had never yet been broken, and by the gate, through which none that once had passed it were ever able to return. He was now impatient as an eagle in a grate. He passed week af-

ter week in clambering the mountains, to see if there was any aperture which the bushes might conceal, but found all the summits inaccessible by their prominence. The iron gate he despaired to open ; for it was not only secured with all the power of art, but was always watched by successive sentinels, and was by its position exposed to the perpetual observation of all the inhabitants.

He then examined the cavern through which the waters of the lake were discharged : and, looking down at a time when the sun shone strongly upon its mouth, he discovered it to be full of broken rocks, which, though they permitted the stream to flow through many narrow passages, would stop any body of solid bulk. He returned discouraged and dejected ; but, having now known the blessing of hope, resolved never to despair.

In these fruitless searches he spent ten months. The time, however, passed cheerfully away : in the morning he rose with new hope, in the evening applauded his own diligence, and in the night slept sound after his fatigue. He met a thousand amusements which beguiled his labour, and diversified his thoughts. He discerned the various instincts of animals, and properties of plants, and found the place replete with wonders, of which he purposed to solace himself with the contemplation, if he should never be able to accomplish his flight ; rejoicing that his endeavours, though yet unsuccessful, had supplied him with a source of inexhaustible inquiry.

But his original curiosity was not yet abated ; he resolved to obtain some knowledge of the ways of men. His wish still continued, but his hope grew less. He ceased to survey any longer the walls of his prison, and spared to search by new toils for interstices which he

knew could not be found, yet determined to keep his design always in view, and lay hold on any expedient that time should offer.

CHAP. VI.

A DISSERTATION ON THE ART OF FLYING.

Among the artists that had been allured into the happy valley, to labour for the accommodation and pleasure of its inhabitants, was a man eminent for his knowledge of the mechanic powers, who had contrived many engines both of use and recreation. By a wheel which the stream turned, he forced the water into a tower, whence it was distributed to all the apartments of the palace. He erected a pavilion in the garden, around which he kept the air always cool by artificial showers. One of the groves, appropriated to the ladies, was ventilated by fans, to which the rivulet that ran through it gave a constant motion; and instruments of soft music were placed at proper distances, of which some played by the impulse of the wind, and some by the power of the stream.

This artist was sometimes visited by Rasselas, who was pleased with every kind of knowledge, imagining that the time would come when all his acquisitions should be of use to him in the open world. He came one day to amuse himself in his usual manner, and found the master busy in building a sailing chariot: he saw that the design was practicable upon a level surface, and with expressions of great esteem solicited its completion. The workman was pleased to find himself so much regarded by the prince, and resolved to gain yet higher honours. "Sir," said he, "you have seen but a small part of what the mechanic sciences

can perform. I have been long of opinion, that instead of the tardy conveyance of ships and chariots, man might use the swifter migration of wings ; that the fields of air are open to knowledge, and that only ignorance and idleness need crawl upon the ground."

This hint rekindled the prince's desire of passing the mountains ; having seen what the mechanist had already performed, he was willing to fancy that he could do more ; yet resolved to inquire further, before he suffered hope to afflict him by disappointment. " I am afraid," said he to the artist, " that your imagination prevails over your skill, and that you now tell me rather what you wish, than what you know. Every animal has his element assigned him ; the birds have the air, and man and beasts the earth." " So," replied the mechanist, " fishes have the water, in which yet beasts can swim by nature, and men by art. He that can swim needs not despair to fly : to swim is to fly in a grosser fluid, and to fly is to swim in a subtler. We are only to proportion our power of resistance to the different density of matter through which we are to pass. You will be necessarily upborne by the air, if you can renew any impulse upon it, faster than the air can recede from the pressure."

" But the exercise of swimming," said the prince, " is very laborious ; the strongest limbs are soon wearied ; I am afraid the act of flying will be yet more violent, and wings will be of no great use, unless we can fly further than we can swim."

" The labour of rising from the ground," said the artist, " will be great, as we see it in the heavier domestic fowls, but as we mount higher, the earth's attraction, and the body's gravity, will be gradually diminished, till we shall arrive at a region where the man will float in the air without any tendency to fall :

no care will then be necessary but to move forwards, which the gentlest impulse will effect. You, Sir, whose curiosity is so extensive, will easily conceive with what pleasure a philosopher, furnished with wings, and hovering in the sky, would see the earth and all its inhabitants, rolling beneath him, and presenting to him successively, by its diurnal motion, all the countries within the same parallel. How must it amuse the pendant spectator to see the moving scene of land and ocean, cities and deserts ! To survey with equal security the marts of trade, and the fields of battle ; mountains infested by barbarians, and fruitful regions gladdened by plenty, and lulled by peace ? How easily shall we then trace the Nile through all its passage ; pass over to distant regions, and examine the face of nature from one extremity of the earth to the other !”

“ All this,” said the prince, “ is much to be desired ; but I am afraid that no man will be able to breathe in these regions of speculation and tranquillity. I have been told that respiration is difficult upon lofty mountains, yet from these precipices, though so high as to produce great tenuity of air, it is very easy to fall : therefore I suspect, that from any height, where life can be supported, there may be danger of too quick descent.”

“ Nothing,” replied the artist, “ will ever be attempted, if all possible objections must be first overcome. I will try the first flight at my own hazard. I have considered the structure of all volant animals, and find the folding continuity of the bat’s wings most easily accommodated to the human form. Upon this model I shall begin my task to-morrow, and in a year expect to tour into the air beyond the malice and pursuit of man. But I will work only on this condition, that the art shall not

be divulged, and that you shall not require me to make wings for any but ourselves."

"Why," said Rasselas, "should you envy others so great an advantage? All skill ought to be exerted for universal good; every man has owed much to others, and ought to repay the kindness that he has received."

"If men were all virtuous," returned the artist, "I should with great alacrity teach them all to fly. But what would be the security of the good, if the bad could at pleasure invade them from the sky? Against an army sailing through the clouds, neither walls, nor mountains, nor seas, could afford any security. A flight of northern savages might hover in the wind, and light at once with irresistible violence upon the capital of a fruitful region that was rolling under them. Even this valley, the retreat of princes, the abode of happiness, might be violated by the sudden descent of some of the naked nations that swarm on the coast of the southern sea."

The prince promised secrecy, and waited for the performance, not wholly hopeless of success. He visited the work from time to time, observed its progress, and remarked many ingenious contrivances to facilitate motion, and unite levity with strength. The artist was every day more certain that he should leave vultures and eagles behind him, and the contagion of his confidence seized upon the prince.

In a year the wings were finished, and on a morning appointed, the maker appeared furnished for flight on a little promontory: he waved his pinions awhile to gather air, then leaped from his stand, and in an instant dropped into the lake. His wings which were of no use in the air, sustained him in the water, and the prince drew him to land, half dead with terror and vexation.

CHAP. VII.

THE PRINCE FINDS A MAN OF LEARNING.

THE prince was not much afflicted by this disaster, having suffered himself to hope for a happier event only because he had no other means of escape in view. He still persisted in his designs to leave the happy valley by the first opportunity.

His imagination was now at a stand ; he had no prospect of entering into the world ; and notwithstanding all his endeavours to support himself, discontent by degrees preyed upon him, and he began again to lose his thoughts in sadness, when the rainy season, which in these countries is periodical, made it inconvenient to wander in the woods.

The rain continued longer and with more violence than had been ever known : the clouds broke on the surrounding mountains, and the torrents streamed into the plain on every side, till the cavern was too narrow to discharge the water. The lake overflowed its banks, and all the level of the valley was covered with the inundation. The eminence, on which the palace was built, and some other spots of rising ground, were all that the eye could now discover. The herds and flocks left the pastures, and both the wild beasts and the tame retreated to the mountains.

This inundation confined all the princes to domestic amusements, and the attention of Rasselas was particularly seized by a poem, which Imlac rehearsed, upon the various conditions of humanity. He commanded the poet to attend him in his apartment, and recite his verses a second time ; then entering into fa-

miliar talk, he thought himself happy in having found a man who knew the world so well, and could so skillfully paint the scenes of life. He asked a thousand questions about things, to which, though common to all other mortals, his confinement from childhood had kept him a stranger. The poet pitied his ignorance, and loved his curiosity, and entertained him from day to day with novelty and instruction, so that the prince regretted the necessity of sleep, and longed till the morning should renew his pleasure.

As they were sitting together, the prince commanded Imlac to relate his history, and to tell by what accident he was forced, or by what motive induced, to close his life in the happy valley. As he was going to begin his narrative, Rasselas was called to a concert, and obliged to restrain his curiosity till the evening.

CHAP. VIII.

THE HISTORY OF IMLAC.

THE close of the day is, in the regions of the torrid zone, the only season of diversion and entertainment, and it was therefore midnight before the musick ceased, and the princesses retired. Rasselas then called for his companion, and required him to begin the story of his life.

"Sir," said Imlac, "my history will not be long: the life that is devoted to knowledge passes silently away, and is very little diversified by events. To talk in publick, to think in solitude, to read and hear, to inquire and answer inquiries, is the business of a scholar. He wanders about the world without pomp or terrour, and is neither known nor valued but by men like himself.

"I was born in the kingdom of Goiama, at no great distance from the fountain of the Nile. My father was a wealthy merchant, who traded between the inland countries of Africk and the ports of the red sea. He was honest, frugal, and diligent, but of mean sentiments, and narrow comprehension: he desired only to be rich, and to conceal his riches, lest he should be spoiled by the governours of the province."

"Surely," said the prince, "my father must be negligent of his charge, if any man in his dominions dares take that which belongs to another. Does he not know that kings are accountable for injustice permitted as well as done? If I were emperour, not the meanest of my subjects should be oppressed with impunity. My blood boils when I am told that a merchant durst not enjoy his honest gains for fear of losing them by the rapacity of power. Name the governour who robbed the people, that I may declare his crimes to the emperour."

"Sir," said Imlac, "your ardour is the natural effect of virtue animated by youth: the time will come when you will acquit your father, and perhaps hear with less impatience of the governour. Oppression is, in the Abissinian dominions, neither frequent nor tolerated; but no form of government has been yet discovered, by which cruelty can be wholly prevented. Subordination supposes power on one part, and subjection on the other; and if power be in the hands of men, it will sometimes be abused. The vigilance of the supreme magistrate may do much, but much will still remain undone. He can never know all the crimes that are committed, and can seldom punish all that he knows."

"This," said the prince, "I do not understand, but *I had rather hear thee than dispute. Continue thy narration.*"

"My father" proceeded Imlac, "originally intended that I should have no other education, than such as might qualify me for commerce; and discovering in me great strength of memory, and quickness of apprehension, often declared his hope that I should be some time the richest man in Abissinia.

"Why," said the prince, "did thy father desire the increase of his wealth, when it was already greater than he durst discover or enjoy? I am unwilling to doubt thy veracity, yet inconsistencies cannot both be true."

"Inconsistencies," answered Imlac, "cannot both be right, but imputed to man, they may both be true. Yet diversity is not inconsistency. My father might expect a time of greater security. However some desire is necessary to keep life in motion, and he whose real wants are supplied, must admit those of fancy."

"This," said the prince, "I can in some measure conceive. I repent that I have interrupted thee."

"With this hope," proceeded Imlac, "he sent me to school: but when I had once found the delight of knowledge, and felt the pleasure of intelligence and the pride of invention, I began silently to despise riches and determined to disappoint the purpose of my father, whose grossness of conception raised my pity. I was twenty years old before his tenderness would expose me to the fatigue of travel, in which time I had been instructed, by successive masters, in the literature of my native country. As every hour taught me something new, I lived in a continual course of gratifications; but as I advanced towards manhood, I lost much of the reverence with which I had been used to look on my instructors; because when the lesson was ended, I did not find them wiser or better than common men.

"At length my father resolved to initiate me in com-

merce, and opening one of his subterranean treasures, counted out ten thousand pieces of gold. This, young man, said he, is the stock with which you must negotiate. I began with less than the fifth part, and you see how diligence and parsimony have increased it. This is your own, to waste or to improve. If you squander it by negligence or caprice, you must wait for my death before you will be rich : if, in four years, you double your stock, we will thenceforward let subordination cease, and live together as friends and partners ; for he shall always be equal with me, who is equally skilled in the art of growing rich.

“ We laid our money upon camels, concealed in bales of cheap goods, and travelled to the shore of the red sea. When I cast my eye on the expanse of waters, my heart bounded like that of a prisoner escaped. I felt an unextinguishable curiosity kindle in my mind, and resolved to snatch this opportunity of seeing the manners of other nations, and of learning sciences unknown in Abissinia.

“ I remember that my father had obliged me to the improvement of my stock, not by a promise which I ought not to violate, but by a penalty which I was at liberty to incur : and therefore determined to gratify my predominant desire, and by drinking at the fountains of knowledge, to quench the thirst of curiosity.

“ As I was supposed to trade without connexion with my father, it was easy for me to become acquainted with the master of a ship, and procure a passage to some other country. I had no motive of choice to regulate my voyage ; it was sufficient for me that wherever I wandered, I should see a country which I had not seen before. I therefore entered a ship bound for Surat, having left a letter for my father declaring my intention.”

CHAP. IX.

THE HISTORY OF IMLAC CONTINUED.

“WHEN I first entered upon the world of waters, and lost sight of land, I looked round about me with pleasing terror, and thinking my soul enlarged by the boundless prospect, imagined that I could gaze round for ever without satiety : but, in a short time, I grew weary of looking on barren uniformity, where I could only see again what I had already seen. I then descended into the ship, and doubted for a while whether all my future pleasures would not end like this, in disgust and disappointment. Yet surely, said I, the ocean and the land are very different ; the only variety of water is rest and motion, but the earth has mountains and valleys, deserts and cities : it is inhabited by men of different customs and contrary opinions ; and I may hope to find variety in life, though I should miss it in nature.

“With this thought I quieted my mind, and amused myself during the voyage, sometimes by learning from the sailors the art of navigation, which I had never practised, and sometimes by forming schemes for my conduct in different situations, in not one of which I have ever been placed.

“I was almost weary of my naval amusements when we landed safely at Surat. I secured my money, and purchasing some commodities for show, joined myself to a caravan that was passing into the inland country. My companions, for some reason or other, conjecturing that I was rich, and, by my inquiries and admiration, finding that I was ignorant, considered me as a novice whom they had a right to cheat, and who was to learn, at the usual expense, the art of fraud. They ex-

posed me to the theft of servants, and the exaction of officers, and saw me plundered upon false pretences, without any advantage to themselves, but that of rejoicing in the superiority of their own knowledge."

"Stop a moment," said the prince. "Is there such depravity in man, as that he should injure another without benefit to himself? I can easily conceive that all are pleased with superiority : but your ignorance was merely accidental, which being neither your crime nor your folly, could afford them no reason to applaud themselves ; and the knowledge which they had, and which you wanted, they might as effectually have shown by warning, as betraying you."

"Pride," said Imlac, "is seldom delicate, it will please itself with very mean advantages ; and envy feels not its own happiness, but when it may be compared with the misery of others. They were my enemies, because they grieved to think me rich ; and my oppressors, because they delighted to find me weak."

"Proceed," said the prince : "I do not doubt of the facts which you relate, but imagine that you impute them to mistaken motives."

"In this company," said Imlac, "I arrived at Agra, the capital of Indostan, the city in which the Great Mogul commonly resides. I applied myself to the language of the country, and in a few months was able to converse with the learned men ; some of whom I found morose and reserved, and others easy and communicative ; some were unwilling to teach another what they had with difficulty learned themselves ; and some showed that the end of their studies was to gain the dignity of instructing."

"To the tutor of the young princes I recommended myself so much, that I was presented to the emperor as a man of uncommon knowledge. The emperor asked

me many questions concerning my country and my travels ; and though I cannot now recollect any thing that he uttered above the power of a common man, he dismissed me astonished at his wisdom, and enamoured of his goodness.

“My credit was now so high, that the merchants, with whom I had travelled, applied to me for recommendations to the ladies of the court. I was surprised at their confidence of solicitation, and gently reproached them with their practices on the road. They heard me with cold indifference, and showed no tokens of shame or sorrow.

“They then urged their request with the offer of a bribe ; but what I would not do for kindness, I would not do for money ; and refused them, not because they had injured me, but because I would not enable them to injure others : for I knew they would have made use of my credit to cheat those who should buy their wares.

“Having resided at Agra till there was no more to be learned, I travelled into Persia, where I saw many remains of ancient magnificence, and observed many new accommodations of life. The Persians are a nation eminently social, and their assemblies afforded me daily opportunities of remarking characters and manners, and of tracing human nature through all its variations.

“From Persia I passed into Arabia, where I saw a nation at once pastoral and warlike ; who live without any settled habitation ; whose only wealth is their flocks and herds ; and who have yet carried on, through all ages, an hereditary war with all mankind, though they neither covet nor envy their possessions.”

CHAP. X.

IMLAC'S HISTORY CONTINUED. A DISSERTATION UP-
ON POETRY.

"WHEREVER I went, I found that poetry was considered as the highest learning, and regarded with a veneration somewhat approaching to that which man would pay to the Angelick Nature. And yet it fills me with wonder, that, in almost all countries, the most ancient poets are considered as the best: whether it be that every other kind of knowledge is an acquisition gradually attained, and poetry is a gift conferred at once; or that the first poetry of every nation surprised them as a novelty, and retained the credit by consent which it received by accident at first: or whether, as the province of poetry is to describe nature and passion, which are always the same, the first writers took possession of the most striking objects for description, and the most probable occurrences for fiction, and left nothing to those that followed them, but transcription of the same events, and new combinations of the same images. Whatever be the reason, it is commonly observed that the early writers are in possession of nature, and their followers of art: that the first excel in strength and invention, and the latter in elegance and refinement.

"I was desirous to add my name to this illustrious fraternity. I read all the poets of Persia and Arabia, and was able to repeat by memory the volumes that are suspended in the mosque of Mecca. But I soon found that no man was ever great by imitation. My desire of excellence impelled me to transfer my attention to nature and to life. Nature was to be my subject,

and men to be my auditors : I could never describe what I had not seen : I could not hope to move those with delight or terrour, whose interests and opinions I did not understand.

“ Being now resolved to be a poet, I saw every thing with a new purpose ; my sphere of attention was suddenly magnified : no kind of knowledge was to be overlooked. I ranged mountains and deserts for images and resemblances, and pictured upon my mind every tree of the forest and flower of the valley. I observed with equal care the crags of the rock and the pinnacles of the palace. Sometimes I wandered along the mazes of the rivulet, and sometimes watched the changes of the summer clouds. To a poet nothing can be useless. Whatever is beautiful, and whatever is dreadful, must be familiar to his imagination : he must be conversant with all that is awfully vast or elegantly little. The plants of the garden, the animals of the wood, the minerals of the earth, and meteors of the sky, must all concur to store his mind with inexhaustible variety : for every idea is useful for the enforcement or decoration of moral or religious truth ; and he, who knows most, will have most power of diversifying his scenes, and of gratifying his reader with remote allusions and unexpected instruction.

“ All the appearances of nature I was therefore careful to study, and every country which I have surveyed, has contributed something to my poetical powers.”

“ In so wide a survey,” said the prince, “ you must surely have left much unobserved. I have lived till now, within the circuit of these mountains, and yet cannot walk abroad without the sight of something which I had never beheld before, or never heeded.”

“ The business of a poet,” said Imlac, “ is to examine, not the individual, but the species ; to remark general

properties and large appearances; he does not number the streaks of the tulip, or describe the different shades in the verdure of the forest. He is to exhibit in his portraits of nature such prominent and striking features as recall the original to every mind; and must neglect the minuter discriminations, which one may have remarked, and another have neglected, for those characteristics which are alike obvious to vigilance and carelessness.

“But the knowledge of nature is only half the task of a poet; he must be acquainted likewise with all the modes of life. His character requires that he estimate the happiness and misery of every condition; observe the power of all the passions in all their combinations, and trace the changes of the human mind as they are modified by various institutions, and accidental influences, of climate or custom, from the sprightliness of infancy to the despondence of decrepitude. He must divest himself of the prejudices of his age or country; he must consider right and wrong in their abstracted and invariable state; he must disregard present laws and opinions, and rise to general and transcendental truths, which will always be the same: he must therefore content himself with the slow progress of his name; condemn the applause of his own time, and commit his claims to the justice of posterity. He must write as the interpreter of nature, and the legislator of mankind, and consider himself as presiding over the thoughts and manners of future generations; as a being superior to time and place.

“His labour is not yet at an end: he must know many languages and many sciences; and, that his style may be worthy of his thoughts, must, by incessant practice, familiarise to himself every delicacy of speech and grace of harmony.”

CHAP. XI.

IMLAC'S NARRATIVE CONTINUED. A HINT ON PILGRIMAGE.

IMLAC now felt the enthusiastick fit, and was proceeding to aggrandize his own profession, when the prince cried out, "Enough ! thou hast convinced me, that no human being can ever be a poet. Proceed with thy narration."

"To be a poet," said Imlac, "is indeed very difficult." "So difficult," returned the prince, "that I will at present hear no more of his labours. Tell me whither you went when you had seen Persia."

"From Persia," said the poet, "I travelled through Syria, and for three years resided in Palestine, where I conversed with great numbers of the northern and western nations of Europe ; the nations which are now in possession of all power and all knowledge : whose armies are irresistible, and whose fleets command the remotest parts of the globe. When I compared these men with the natives of our own kingdom, and those that surround us, they appeared almost another order of beings. In their countries it is difficult to wish for any thing that may not be obtained : a thousand arts of which we never heard, are continually labouring for their convenience and pleasure ; and whatever their own climate has denied them is supplied by their commerce."

"By what means," said the prince, "are the Europeans thus powerful, or why, since they can so easily visit Asia and Africa for trade or conquest, cannot the Asiaticks and Africans invade their coasts, plant colonies in their ports, and give laws to their natural prin-

ces! The same wind that carries them back would bring us thither."

"They are more powerful, Sir, than we," answered Imlac, "because they are wiser; knowledge will always predominate over ignorance, as man governs the other animals. But why their knowledge is more than ours, I know not what reason can be given, but the unsearchable will of the Supreme Being."

"When," said the prince with a sigh, "shall I be able to visit Palestine, and mingle with this mighty confluence of nations? Till that happy moment shall arrive, let me fill up the time with such representations as thou canst give me. I am not ignorant of the motive that assembles such numbers in that place, and cannot but consider it as the centre of wisdom and piety, to which the best and wisest men of every land must be continually resorting.

"There are some nations," said Imlac, "that send few visitants to Palestine: for many numerous and learned sects in Europe concur to censure pilgrimage as superstitious, or deride it as ridiculous."

"You know," said the prince, "how little my life has made me acquainted with diversity of opinions; it will be too long to hear the arguments on both sides; you, that have considered them, tell me the result.

"Pilgrimage" said Imlac, "like many other acts of piety, may be reasonable or superstitious, according to the principles upon which it is performed. Long journeys in search of truth are not commanded. Truth, such as is necessary to the regulation of life, is always found where it is honestly sought. Change of place is no natural cause of the increase of piety, for it inevitably produces dissipation of mind. Yet, since men go every day to view the fields where great actions have been performed, and return with stronger impressions

of the event, curiosity of the same kind may naturally dispose us to view that country whence our religion had its beginning ; and I believe no man surveys those awful scenes without some confirmation of holy resolutions. That the Supreme Being may be more easily propitiated in one place than in another, is the dream of idle superstition ; but that some places may operate upon our own minds in an uncommon manner, is an opinion which hourly experience will justify. He who supposes that his vices may be more successfully combated in Palestine, will, perhaps, find himself mistaken, yet he may go thither without folly : he who thinks they will be more freely pardoned, dishonours at once his reason and religion."

"These," said the prince, "are European distinctions. I will consider them another time. What have you found to be the effect of knowledge? Are those nations happier than we?"

"There is so much infelicity," said the poet, "in the world, that scarce any man has leisure from his own distresses to estimate the comparative happiness of others. Knowledge is certainly one of the means of pleasure, as is confessed by the natural desire which every mind feels of increasing its ideas. Ignorance is mere privation, by which nothing can be produced : it is a vacuity in which the soul sits motionless and torpid for want of attraction ; and, without knowing why, we always rejoice when we learn, and grieve when we forget. I am therefore inclined to conclude, that if nothing counteracts the natural consequence of learning, we grow more happy as our minds take a wider range."

"In enumerating the particular comforts of life, we shall find many advantages on the side of the Europeans. They cure wounds and diseases with which we

languish and perish. We suffer inclemencies of weather which they can obviate. They have engines for the dispatch of many laborious works, which we must perform by manual industry. There is such communication between distant places, that one friend can hardly be said to be absent from another. Their policy removes all publick inconveniencies : they have roads cut through their mountains, and bridges laid upon their rivers. And, if we descend to the privacies of life, their habitations are more commodious, and their possessions are more secure."

"They are surely happy," said the prince, "who have all these conveniencies, of which I envy none so much as the facility with which separated friends interchange their thoughts."

"The Europeans," answered Imlac, "are less unhappy than we, but they are not happy. Human life is every where a state in which much is to be endured, and little to be enjoyed."

CHAP. XII.

THE STORY OF IMLAC CONTINUED.

"I AM not yet willing," said the prince, "to suppose that happiness is so parsimoniously distributed to mortals ; nor can believe but that, if I had the choice of life, I should be able to fill every day with pleasure. I would injure no man, and should provoke no resentment : I would relieve every distress, and should enjoy the benedictions of gratitude. I would chuse my friends among the wise, and my wife among the virtuous ; and therefore should be in no danger from treachery or unkindness. My children should, by my care, be learned and pious, and would repay to my age

what their childhood had received. What would dare to molest him who might call on every side to thousands enriched by his bounty, or assisted by his power? And why should not life glide quietly away in the soft reciprocation of protection and reverence? All this may be done without the help of European refinements, which appear by their effects to be rather specious than useful. Let us leave them, and pursue our journey."

"From Palestine," said Imlac, "I passed through many regions of Asia; in the more civilized kingdoms as a trader, and among the barbarians of the mountains as a pilgrim. At last I began to long for my native country, that I might repose after my travels and fatigues, in the places where I had spent my earliest years, and gladden my old companions with the recital of my adventures. Often did I figure to myself those with whom I had sported away the gay hours of dawning life, sitting round me in its evening, wondering at my tales, and listening to my counsels.

"When this thought had taken possession of my mind I considered every moment as wasted which did not bring me nearer to Abissinia. I hastened into Egypt, and notwithstanding my impatience, was detained ten months in the contemplation of its ancient magnificence, and in inquiries after the remains of its ancient learning. I found in Cairo a mixture of all nations: some brought thither by the love of knowledge, some by the hope of gain, and many by the desire of living after their own manner without observation, and of lying hid in the obscurity of multitudes; for in a city populous as Cairo, it is possible to obtain at the same time the gratifications of society, and the secrecy of solitude.

"From Cairo I travelled to Suez, and embarked on the Red Sea, passing along the coast till I arrived at

the port from which I had departed twenty years before. Here I joined myself to a caravan, and re-entered my native country.

“I now expected the caresses of my kinsmen and the congratulations of my friends, and was not without hope that my father, whatever value he had set upon riches, would own with gladness and pride a son who was able to add to the felicity and honour of the nation. But I was soon convinced that my thoughts were vain. My father had been dead fourteen years, having divided his wealth among my brothers, who were removed to some other provinces. Of my companions the greater part was in the grave; of the rest, some could with difficulty remember me, and some considered me as one corrupted by foreign manners.

“A man used to vicissitudes is not easily dejected. I forgot after a time, my disappointment, and endeavoured to recommend myself to the nobles of the kingdom; they admitted me to their tables, heard my story, and dismissed me. I opened a school, and was prohibited to teach. I then resolved to sit down in the quiet of domestick life, and addressed a lady that was fond of my conversation, but rejected my suit, because my father was a merchant.

“Wearied at last with solicitation and repulses, I resolved to hide myself for ever from the world, and depend no longer on the opinion or caprice of others. I waited for the time when the gate of the *happy valley* should open, that I might bid farewell to hope and fear: the day came; my performance was distinguished with favour, and I resigned myself with joy to perpetual confinement.”

“Hast thou here found happiness at last?” said Rasselas. “Tell me without reserve; art thou content with thy condition? or dost thou wish to be again wan-

dering and inquiring ? All the inhabitants of this valley celebrate their lot, and at the annual visit of the emperor, invite others to partake of their felicity."

"Great prince," said Imlac, "I shall speak the truth ; I know not one of all your attendants who does not lament the hour when he entered this retreat. I am less unhappy than the rest, because I have a mind replete with images, which I can vary and combine at pleasure. I can amuse my solitude by the renovation of the knowledge which begins to fade from my memory, and by recollection of the accidents of my past life. Yet all this ends in the sorrowful consideration, that my acquirements are now useless, and that none of my pleasures can be again enjoyed. The rest, whose minds have no impression but of the present moment, are either corroded by malignant passions, or sit stupid in the gloom of perpetual vacancy."

"What passions can infest those," said the prince, "who have no rivals ? we are in a place where impotence precludes malice, and where all envy is repressed by community of enjoyments."

"There may be community," said Imlac, "of material possessions, but there can never be community of love or of esteem. It must happen that one will please more than another ; he that knows himself despised will always be envious ; and still more envious and malevolent, if he is condemned to live in the presence of those who despise him. The invitations, by which they allure others to a state which they feel to be wretched, proceed from the natural malignity of hopeless misery. They are weary of themselves, and of each other, and expect to find relief in new companions. They envy the liberty which their folly has forfeited, and would gladly see all mankind imprisoned like themselves.

"From this crime, however, I am wholly free. No man can say that he is wretched by my persuasion. I look with pity on the crowds who are annually soliciting admission to captivity, and wish that it were lawful for me to warn them of their danger."

"My dear Imlac," said the prince, "I will open to thee my whole heart. I have long meditated an escape from the happy valley. I have examined the mountains on every side, but find myself insuperably barred: teach me the way to break my prison; thou shalt be the companion of my flight, the guide of my rambles, the partner of my fortune, and my sole director in the *choice of life*."

"Sir," answered the poet, "your escape will be difficult, and, perhaps, you may soon repent your curiosity. The world, which you figure to yourself, smooth and quiet as the lake in the valley, you will find a sea foaming with tempests, and boiling with whirlpools: you will be sometimes overwhelmed by the waves of violence, and sometimes dashed against the rocks of treachery. Amidst wrongs and frauds, competitions and anxieties, you will wish a thousand times for these seats of quiet, and willingly quit hope to be free from fear."

"Do not seek to deter me from my purpose," said the prince: "I am impatient to see what thou hast seen; and, since thou art thyself weary of the valley, it is evident, that thy former state was better than this. Whatever be the consequence of my experiment, I am resolved to judge with mine own eyes, of the various conditions of men, and, then to make deliberately my *choice of life*."

"I am afraid," said Imlac, "you are hindered by stronger restraints than my persuasions; yet if your determination is fixed, I do not counsel you to despair. Few things are impossible to diligence and skill."

CHAP. XIII.

RASSELAS DISCOVERS THE MEANS OF ESCAPE.

THE prince now dismissed his favourite to rest, but the narrative of wonders and novelties filled his mind with perturbation. He revolved all that he had heard, and prepared innumerable questions for the morning.

Much of his uneasiness was now removed. He had a friend to whom he could impart his thoughts, and whose experience could assist him in his designs. His heart was no longer condemned to swell with silent vexation. He thought that even the *happy valley* might be endured with such a companion, and that if they could range the world together, he should have nothing further to desire.

In a few days the water was discharged, and the ground dried. The prince and Imlac then walked out together to converse without the notice of the rest. The prince, whose thoughts were always on the wing, as he passed by the gate, said, with a countenance of sorrow, "Why art thou so strong and man so weak?"

"Man is not weak," answered his companion; "knowledge is more than equivalent to force. The master of mechanicks laughs at strength. I can burst the gate, but cannot do it secretly. Some other expedient must be tried."

As they were walking on the side of the mountain, they observed that the conies, which the rain had driven from their burrows, had taken shelter among the bushes, and formed holes behind them, tending upwards in an oblique line. "It has been the opinion of antiquity," said Imlac, "that human reason borrowed many arts from the instinct of animals; let us, there-

fore, not think ourselves degraded by learning from the coney. We may escape by piercing the mountain in the same direction. We will begin where the summit hangs over the middle part, and labour upward till we shall issue up beyond the prominence."

The eyes of the prince, when he heard of this proposal, sparkled with joy. The execution was easy, and the success certain.

No time was now lost. They hastened early in the morning to choose a place proper for their mine. They clambered with great fatigue among crags and brambles, and returned without having discovered any part that favoured their design. The second and the third day were spent in the same manner and with the same frustration. But, on the fourth, they found a small cavern, concealed by a thicket, where they resolved to make their experiment.

Imlac procured instruments proper to hew stone and remove earth, and they fell to their work on the next day with more eagerness than vigour. They were presently exhausted by their efforts, and sat down to pant upon the grass. The prince, for a moment, appeared to be discouraged. "Sir," said his companion, "practice will enable us to continue our labour for a longer time: mark, however, how far we have advanced, and you will find that our toil will some time have an end. Great works are performed, not by strength, but perseverance: yonder palace was raised by single stones, yet you see its height and spaciousness. He that shall walk with vigour three hours a day, will pass in seven years a space equal to the circumference of the globe."

They returned to their work day after day, and, in a short time, found a fissure in the rock, which enabled them to pass far with very little obstruction. This Ras-

selas considered as a good omen. "Do not disturb your mind," said Imlac, "with other hopes or fears than reason may suggest ; if you are pleased with prognostics of good, you will be terrified likewise with tokens of evil, and your whole life will be a prey to superstition. Whatever facilitates our work is more than an omen, it is a cause of success. This is one of those pleasing surprises which often happen to active resolution. Many things difficult to design prove easy to performance."

CHAP. XIV.

RASSELAS AND IMLAC RECEIVE AN UNEXPECTED VISIT.

THEY had now wrought their way to the middle, and solaced their toil with the approach of liberty, when the prince coming down to refresh himself with air, found his sister Nekayah standing before the mouth of the cavity. He started and stood confused, afraid to tell his design, and yet hopeless to conceal it. A few moments determined him to repose on her fidelity ; and secure her secrecy by a declaration without reserve.

"Do not imagine," said the princess, "that I came hither as a spy : I had long observed from my window, that you and Imlac directed your walk every day towards the same point, but I did not suppose you had any better reason for the preference than a cooler shade, or more fragrant bank : nor followed you with any other design than to partake of your conversation. Since then not suspicion but fondness has detected you, let me not lose the advantage of my discovery. I am equally weary of confinement with yourself, and not

less desirous of knowing what is done or suffered in the world. Permit me to fly with you from this tasteless tranquillity, which will yet grow more loathsome when you have left me. You may deny me to accompany you, but cannot hinder me from following."

The prince, who loved Nekayah above his other sisters, had no inclination to refuse her request, and grieved that he had lost an opportunity of showing his confidence by a voluntary communication. It was therefore agreed that she should leave the valley with them; and that in the mean time, she should watch, lest any other straggler should, by chance or curiosity, follow them to the mountain.

At length their labour was at an end; they saw light beyond the prominence, and issuing to the top of the mountain, beheld the Nile, yet a narrow current, wandering beneath them.

The prince looked round with rapture, anticipated all the pleasures of travel, and in thought was already transported beyond his father's dominions. Imlac, though very joyful at his escape, had less expectation of pleasure in the world, which he had before tried, and of which he had been weary.

Rasselas was so much delighted with a wider horizon, that he could not soon be persuaded to return into the valley. He informed his sister that the way was open, and that nothing now remained but to prepare for their departure.

CHAP. XV.

THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS LEAVE THE VALLEY, AND
SEE MANY WONDERS.

THE prince and princess had jewels sufficient to make them rich whenever they came into a place of com-

merce, which, by Imlac's direction, they hid in their clothes, and, on the night of the next full moon, all left the valley. The princess was followed only by a single favourite, who did not know whither she was going.

They clambered through the cavity, and began to go down on the other side. The princess and her maid turned their eyes towards every part, and, seeing nothing to bound their prospect, considered themselves as in danger of being lost in a dreary vacuity. They stopped and trembled. "I am almost afraid," said the princess, "to begin a journey of which I cannot perceive an end, and to venture into this immense plain, where I may be approached on every side by men whom I never saw." The prince felt nearly the same emotions, though he thought it more manly to conceal them.

Imlac smiled at their terrors, and encouraged them to proceed; but the princess continued irresolute till she had been imperceptibly drawn forward too far to return.

In the morning they found some shepherds in the field, who set milk and fruits before them. The princess wondered that she did not see a palace ready for her reception, and a table spread with delicacies; but being faint and hungry, she drank the milk and eat the fruits, and thought them of a higher flavour than the produce of the valley.

They travelled forward by easy journies, being all unaccustomed to toil or difficulty, and knowing, that though they might be missed, they could not be pursued. In a few days they came into a more populous region, where Imlac was diverted with the admiration which his companions expressed at the diversity of manners, stations, and employments.

Their dress was such as might not bring upon them the suspicion of having any thing to conceal, yet

the prince, wherever he came, expected to be obeyed, and the princess was frightened, because those that came into her presence did not prostrate themselves before her. Imlac was forced to observe them with great vigilance, lest they should betray their rank by their unusual behaviour, and detained them several weeks in the first village, to accustom them to the sight of common mortals.

By degrees the royal wanderers were taught to understand that they had for a time laid aside their dignity, and were to expect only such regard as liberality and courtesy could procure. And Imlac having, by many admonitions, prepared them to endure the tumults of a port, and the ruggedness of the commercial race, brought them down to the sea-coast.

The prince and his sister, to whom every thing was new, were gratified equally at all places, and therefore remained for some months at the port without any inclination to pass further. Imlac was content with their stay, because he did not think it safe to expose them, unpractised in the world, to the hazards of a foreign country.

At last he began to fear lest they should be discovered, and proposed to fix a day for their departure. They had no pretensions to judge for themselves, and referred the whole scheme to his direction. He therefore took passage in a ship to Suez; and, when the time came, with great difficulty prevailed on the princess to enter the vessel. They had a quick and prosperous voyage, and from Suez travelled by land to Cairo.

CHAP. XVI.

THEY ENTER CAIRO, AND FIND EVERY MAN HAPPY.

As they approached the city, which filled the strangers with astonishment, "This," said Imlac to the prince, "is the place where travellers and merchants assemble from all the corners of the earth. You will here find men of every character, and every occupation. Commerce is here honourable: I will act as a merchant, and you shall live as strangers, who have no other end of travel than curiosity: It will soon be observed that we are rich; our reputation will procure us access to all whom we shall desire to know; you will see all the conditions of humanity, and enable yourself at leisure to make your *choice of life*."

They now entered the town, stunned by the noise, and offended by the crowds. Instruction had not yet so prevailed over habit, but that they wondered to see themselves pass undistinguished along the street, and met by the lowest of the people without reverence or notice. The princess could not at first bear the thought of being levelled with the vulgar, and, for some days, continued in her chamber, where she was served by her favourite Pekuah as in the palace of the valley.

Imlac, who understood traffick, sold part of the jewels the next day, and hired a house, which he adorned with such magnificence, that he was immediately considered as a merchant of great wealth. His politeness attracted many acquaintance, and his generosity made him courted by many dependants. His table was crowded by men of every nation, who all admired his knowledge, and solicited his favour. His companions not being able to mix in the conversation, could make no

discovery of their ignorance or surprise, and were gradually initiated in the world as they gained knowledge of the language.

The prince had by frequent lectures, been taught the use and nature of money ; but the ladies could not for a long time, comprehend what the merchants did with small pieces of gold and silver, or why things of so little use should be received as equivalent to the necessities of life.

They studied the language two years, while Imlac was preparing to set before them the various ranks and conditions of mankind. He grew acquainted with all who had any thing uncommon in their fortune or conduct. He frequented the voluptuous and the frugal, the idle and the busy, the merchants and the men of learning.

The prince being now able to converse with fluency, and having learned the caution necessary to be observed in his intercourse with strangers, began to accompany Imlac to places of resort, and to enter into all assemblies, that he might make his *choice of life*.

For some time he thought choice needless, because all appeared to him equally happy. Wherever he went he met gaiety and kindness, and heard the song of joy or the laugh of carelessness. He began to believe that the world overflowed with universal plenty, and that nothing was withheld either from want or merit ; that every hand showered liberality, and every heart melted with benevolence ; "and who then," says he, "will be suffered to be wretched ?"

Imlac permitted the pleasing delusion, and was unwilling to crush the hope of inexperience, till one day having sat a while silent, "I know not," said the prince, "what can be the reason that I am more unhappy than any of our friends. I see them perpetually and unal-

terably cheerful, but feel my own mind restless and uneasy. I am unsatisfied with those pleasures which I seem most to court; I live in the crowds of jollity, not so much to enjoy company, as to shun myself, and am only loud and merry to conceal my sadness."

"Every man," said Imlac, "may, by examining his own mind, guess what passes in the minds of others: when you feel that your own gaiety is counterfeit, it may justly lead you to suspect that of your companions not to be sincere. Envy is commonly reciprocal. We are long before we are convinced that happiness is never to be found, and each believes it possessed by others, to keep alive the hope of obtaining it for himself. In the assembly, where you passed the last night, there appeared such sprightliness of air, and volatility of fancy, as might have suited beings of an higher order, formed to inhabit serener regions, inaccessible to care or sorrow: yet, believe me, prince, there was not one who did not dread the moment when solitude should deliver him to the tyranny of reflection."

"This," said the prince, "may be true of others, since it is true of me; yet, whatever be the general infelicity of man, one condition is more happy than another, and wisdom surely directs us to take the least evil in the *choice of life*."

"The causes of good and evil," answered Imlac, "are so various and uncertain, so often entangled with each other, so diversified by various relations, and so much subject to accidents which cannot be foreseen, that he who would fix his condition upon incontestible reasons of preference, must live and die inquiring and deliberating."

"But surely" said Rasselas, "the wise men to whom we listen with reverence and wonder, chose that mode

of life for themselves which they thought most likely to make them happy."

"Very few," said the poet, "live by choice. Every man is placed in his present condition by causes which acted without his foresight, and with which he did not always willingly co-operate: and therefore you will rarely meet one who does not think the lot of his neighbour better than his own."

"I am pleased to think," said the prince, "that my birth has given me at least one advantage over others, by enabling me to determine for myself. I have here the world before me; I will review it at leisure: surely happiness is somewhere to be found."

CHAP. XVII.

THE PRINCE ASSOCIATES WITH YOUNG MEN OF SPIRIT AND GAIETY.

RASSELAS rose next day, and resolved to begin his experiments upon life. "Youth," cried he, "is the time of gladness: I will join myself to the young men, whose only business is to gratify their desires, and whose time is all spent in a succession of enjoyments."

To such societies he was readily admitted, but a few days brought him back weary and disgusted. Their mirth was without images; their laughter without motive; their pleasures were gross and sensual, in which the mind had no part; their conduct was at once wild and mean; they laughed at order and at law, but the frown of power dejected, and the eye of wisdom abashed them.

The prince soon concluded, that he should never be happy in a course of life of which he was ashamed. He thought it unsuitable to a reasonable being to act with-

out a plan, and to be sad or cheerful only by chance. "Happiness," said he, "must be something solid and permanent, without fear and without uncertainty."

But his young companions had gained so much of his regard by their frankness and courtesy, that he could not leave them without warning and remonstrance. "My friends," said he, "I have seriously considered our manners and our prospects, and find that we have mistaken our own interest. The first years of man must make provision for the last. He that never thinks never can be wise. Perpetual levity must end in ignorance ; and intemperance, though it may fire the spirits for an hour, will make life short or miserable. Let us consider that youth is of no long duration, and that in maturer age, when the enchantments of fancy shall cease, and phantoms of delight dance no more about us, we shall have no comforts but the esteem of wise men, and the means of doing good. Let us, therefore, stop, while to stop is in our power : let us live as men who are some time to grow old, and to whom it will be the most dreadful of all evils to count their past years by follies, and to be reminded of their former luxuriance of health only by the maladies which riot has produced."

They stared awhile in silence one upon another, and at last drove him away by a general chorus of continued laughter.

The consciousness that his sentiments were just, and his intentions kind, was scarcely sufficient to support him against the horror of derision. But he recovered his tranquillity, and pursued his search.

CHAP. XVIII.

THE PRINCE FINDS A WISE AND HAPPY MAN.

As he was one day walking in the street, he saw a spacious building which all were, by the open doors, invited to enter : he followed the stream of people, and found it a hall or school of declamation, in which professors read lectures to their auditory. He fixed his eye upon a sage raised above the rest, who discoursed with great energy on the government of the passions. His look was venerable, his action graceful, his pronunciation clear, and his diction elegant. He showed, with great strength of sentiment, and variety of illustration, that human nature is degraded and debased, when the lower faculties predominate over the higher ; that when fancy, the parent of passion, usurps the dominion of the mind, nothing ensues but the natural effect of unlawful government, perturbation and confusion ; that she betrays the fortresses of the intellect to rebels, and excites her children to sedition against reason, their lawful sovereign. He compared reason to the sun, of which the light is constant, uniform, and lasting ; and fancy to a meteor, of bright but transitory lustre, irregular in its motion, and delusive in its direction.

He then communicated the various precepts given from time to time for the conquest of passion, and displayed the happiness of those who had obtained the important victory, after which man is no longer the slave of fear, nor the fool of hope ; is no more emaciated by envy, inflamed by anger, emasculated by tenderness, or depressed by grief ; but walks on calmly through the tumults or privacies of life, as the sun pur-

sues alike his course through the calm or the stormy sky.

He enumerated many examples of heroes immovable by pain or pleasure, who looked with indifference on those modes or accidents to which the vulgar give the names of good and evil. He exhorted his hearers to lay aside their prejudices, and arm themselves against the shafts of malice or misfortune, by invulnerable patience, concluding, that this state only was happiness, and that this happiness was in every one's power.

Rasselas listened to him with the veneration due to the instructions of a superior being, and, waiting for him at the door, humbly implored the liberty of visiting so great a master of true wisdom. The lecturer hesitated a moment, when Rasselas put a purse of gold into his hand, which he received with a mixture of joy and wonder.

"I have found," said the prince, at his return to Imlac, "a man who can teach all that is necessary to be known, who from the unshaken throne of rational fortitude, looks down on the scenes of life changing beneath him. He speaks, and attention watches his lips. He reasons, and conviction closes his periods. This man shall be my future guide : I will learn his doctrines, and imitate his life."

"Be not too hasty," said Imlac, "to trust, or to admire the teachers of morality : they discourse like angels but they live like men."

Rasselas, who could not conceive how any man could reason so forcibly without feeling the cogency of his own arguments, paid his visit in a few days, and was denied admission. He had now learned the power of money, and made his way by a piece of gold to the inner apartment, where he found the philosopher in a

room half darkened, with his eyes misty, and his face pale. "Sir," said he, "you are come at a time when all human friendship is useless ; what I suffer cannot be remedied, what I have lost cannot be supplied. My daughter, my only daughter, from whose tenderness I expected all the comforts of my age, died last night of a fever. My views, my purposes, my hopes are at an end : I am now a lonely being disunited from society."

"Sir," said the prince, "mortality is an event by which a wise man can never be surprised : we know that death is always near, and it should therefore always be expected." "Young man," answered the philosopher, "you speak like one that has never felt the pangs of separation." "Have you then forgot the precepts," said Rasselas, "which you so powerfully enforced? Has wisdom no strength to arm the heart against calamity? Consider, that external things are naturally variable, but truth and reason are always the same." "What comfort," said the mourner, "can truth and reason afford me? of what effect are they now, but to tell me, that my daughter will not be restored?"

The prince, whose humanity would not suffer him to insult misery with reproof, went away convinced of the emptiness of rhetorical sound, and the inefficacy of polished periods and studied sentences.

CHAP. XIX.

A GLIMPSE OF PASTORAL LIFE.

HE was still eager upon the same inquiry : and having heard of a hermit, that lived near the lowest cataract of the Nile, and filled the whole country with the fame of his sanctity, resolved, to visit his re-

treat, and enquire whether that felicity which publick life could not afford, was to be found in solitude ; and whether a man whose age and virtue made him venerable, could teach any peculiar art of shunning evils, or enduring them ?

Imlac and the princess agreed to accompany him, and, after the necessary preparations, they began their journey. Their way lay through the fields, where shepherds tended their flocks, and the lambs were playing upon the pasture. " This," said the poet, " is the life which has been often celebrated for its innocence and quiet ; let us pass the heat of the day among the shepherds tents, and know whether all our searches are not to terminate in pastoral simplicity."

The proposal pleased them, and they induced the shepherds, by small presents and familiar questions, to tell their opinion of their own state : they were so rude and ignorant, so little able to compare the good with the evil of the occupation, and so indistinct in their narratives and descriptions, that very little could be learned from them. But it was evident that their hearts were cankered with discontent : that they considered themselves as condemned to labour for the luxury of the rich, and looked up with stupid malevolence toward those that were placed above them.

The princess pronounced with vehemence, that she would never suffer these envious savages to be her companions, and that she should not soon be desirous of seeing any more specimens of rustick happiness ; but could not believe that all the accounts of primeval pleasures were fabulous ; and was yet in doubt, whether life had any thing that could be justly preferred to the placid gratifications of fields and woods. She hoped that the time would come, when, with a few virtuous and elegant companions, she should gather flowers

planted by her own hand, fondle the lambs of her own ewe, and listen, without care, among brooks and breezes, to one of her maidens reading in the shade.

CHAP. XX.

THE DANGER OF PROSPERITY.

ON the next day they continued their journey, till the heat compelled them to look round for shelter. At a small distance they saw a thick wood, which they no sooner entered than they perceived that they were approaching the habitations of men. The shrubs were diligently cut away to open walks where the shades were darkest; the boughs of opposite trees were artificially interwoven; seats of flowery turf were raised in vacant spaces, and a rivulet, that wantoned along the side of a winding path, had its banks sometimes opened into small basins, and its streams sometimes obstructed by little mounds of stone, heaped together to increase its murmurs.

They passed slowly through the wood, delighted with such unexpected accommodations, and entertained each other with conjecturing what, or who, he could be, that, in those rude and unfrequented regions, had leisure and art for such harmless luxury.

As they advanced they heard the sound of musick, and saw youths and virgins dancing in the grove; and, going still further, beheld a stately palace built upon a hill surrounded with woods. The laws of eastern hospitality allowed them to enter, and the master welcomed them like a man liberal and wealthy.

He was skilful enough in appearances soon to discern that they were no common guests, and spread his table with manificence. The eloquence of Imlac caught

his attention, and the lofty courtesy of the princess excited his respect. When they offered to depart he entreated their stay, and was the next day still more unwilling to dismiss them than before. They were easily persuaded to stop, and civility grew up in time to freedom and confidence.

The prince now saw all the domesticks cheerful, and all the face of nature smiling round the place, and could not forbear to hope that he should find here what he was seeking ; but when he was congratulating the master upon his possessions, he answered with a sigh, "My condition has indeed the appearance of happiness, but appearances are delusive. My prosperity puts my life in danger ; the Bassa of Egypt is my enemy, incensed only by my wealth and popularity. I have been hitherto protected against him by the princes of the country ; but, as the favour of the great is uncertain, I know not how soon my defenders may be persuaded to share the plunder with the Bassa. I have sent my treasures into a distant country, and, upon the first alarm, am prepared to follow them. Then will my enemies riot in my mansion, and enjoy the gardens which I have planted."

They all joined in lamenting his danger, and deprecating his exile : and the princess was so much disturbed with the tumult of grief and indignation, that she retired to her apartment. They continued with their kind inviter a few days longer, and then went forward to find the hermit.

CHAP. XXI.

THE HAPPINESS OF SOLITUDE. THE HERMIT'S HISTORY.

THEY came on the third day, by the direction of the peasants, to the hermit's cell : it was a cavern in the

side of a mountain, overshadowed with palm trees; at such a distance from the cataract, that nothing more was heard than a gentle uniform murmur, such as composed the mind to pensive meditation, especially when it was assisted by the wind whistling among the branches. The first rude essay of nature had been so much improved by human labour, that the cave contained several apartments appropriated to different uses, and often afforded lodging to travellers, whom darkness or tempests happened to overtake.

The hermit sat on a bench at the door, to enjoy the coolness of the evening. On one side lay a book with pens and papers, on the other mechanical instruments of various kinds. As they approached him unregarded, the princess observed that he had not the countenance of a man that had found or could teach the way to happiness.

They saluted him with great respect, which he repaid like a man not unaccustomed to the forms of courts. "My children," said he, "if you have lost your way, you shall be willingly supplied with such conveniencies for the night as this cavern will afford. I have all that nature requires, and you will not expect delicacies in a hermit's cell."

They thanked him, and, entering, were pleased with the neatness and regularity of the place. The hermit set flesh and wine before them, though he fed only upon fruits and water. His discourse was cheerful without levity, and pious without enthusiasm. He soon gained the esteem of his guests, and the princess repented of her hasty censure.

At last Imlac began thus: "I do not now wonder that your reputation is so far extended; we have heard at Cairo of your wisdom, and came hither to implore your direction for this young man and maiden in the choice of life."

"To him that lives well," answered the hermit, "every form of life is good ; nor can I give any other rule for choice, than to remove from all apparent evil."

"He will remove most certainly from evil," said the prince, "who shall devote himself to that solitude which you have recommended by your example."

"I have indeed lived fifteen years in solitude," said the hermit, "but have no desire that my example should gain any imitators. In my youth I professed arms, and was raised by degrees to the highest military rank. I have traversed wide countries at the head of my troops, and seen many battles and sieges. At last, being disgusted by the preferment of a younger officer, and feeling that my vigour was beginning to decay, I was resolved to close my life in peace, having found the world full of snares, discord, and misery. I had once escaped from the pursuit of the enemy by the shelter of this cavern, and therefore chose it for my final residence. I employed artificers to form it into chambers, and stored it with all that I was likely to want.

"For some time after my retreat, I rejoiced like a tempest-beaten sailor at his entrance into the harbour, being delighted with the sudden change of the noise and hurry of war to stillness and repose. When the pleasure of novelty went away, I employed my hours in examining the plants which grow in the valley, and the minerals which I collected from the rocks. But that inquiry is now grown tasteless and irksome. I have been for some time unsettled and distracted : my mind is disturbed with a thousand perplexities of doubt, and vanities of imagination, which hourly prevail upon me because I have no opportunities of relaxation or diversion. I am sometimes ashamed to think that I could not secure myself from vice but by retiring from the exercise of virtue, and begin to suspect that I

was rather impelled by resentment, than led by devotion, into solitude. My fancy riots in scenes of folly, and I lament that I have lost so much, and have gained so little. In solitude, if I escape the example of bad men, I want likewise the counsel and conversation of the good: I have been long comparing the evils with the advantages of society, and resolve to return into the world to-morrow. The life of a solitary man will be certainly miserable, but not certainly devout."

They heard his resolution with surprise, but after a short pause, offered to conduct him to Cairo. He dug up a considerable treasure which he had hid among the rocks, and accompanied them to the city, on which, as he approached it, he gazed with rapture.

CHAP. XXII.

THE HAPPINESS OF A LIFE LED ACCORDING TO NATURE.

RASSELAS went often to an assembly of learned men, who met at stated times to unbend their minds, and compare their opinions. Their manners were somewhat coarse, but their conversation was instructive, and their disputations acute, though sometimes too violent, and often continued till neither controvertist remembered upon what question they began. Some faults were almost general among them: every one was desirous to dictate to the rest, and every one was pleased to hear the genius or knowledge of another depreciated.

In this assembly Rasselas was relating his interview with the hermit, and the wonder with which he heard him censure a course of life which he had so deliberately chosen and so laudably followed. The senti-

ments of the hearers were various. Some were of opinion, that the folly of his choice had been justly punished by condemnation to perpetual perseverance. One of the youngest among them, with great vehemence, pronounced him an hypocrite. Some talked of the right of society to the labour of individuals, and considered retirement as a desertion of duty. Others readily allowed, that there was a time when the claims of the publick were satisfied, and when a man might properly sequester himself, to review his life, and purify his heart.

One, who appeared more affected with the narrative than the rest, thought it likely, that the hermit would, in a few years go back to his retreat, and, perhaps, if shame did not restrain, or death intercept him, return once more from his retreat into the world: "For the hope of happiness," said he, "is so strongly impressed, that the longest experience is not able to efface it. Of the present state whatever it be, we feel, and are forced to confess, the misery; yet, when the same state is again at a distance, imagination paints it as desirable. But the time will surely come, when desire will be no longer our torment, and no man shall be wretched but by his own fault.

"This," said a philosopher, who had heard him with tokens of great impatience, "is the present condition of a wise man. The time is already come, when none are wretched but by their own fault. Nothing is more idle than to enquire after happiness, which nature has kindly placed within our reach. The way to be happy is to live according to nature, in obedience to that universal and unalterable law with which every heart is originally impressed: which is not written on it by precept, but engraven by destiny, not instilled by education, but infused at our nativity. He that lives

according to nature will suffer nothing from the delusions of hope, or importunities of desire : he will receive and reject with equability of temper ; and act or suffer as the reason of things shall alternately prescribe. Other men may amuse themselves with suitable definitions, or intricate ratiocinations. Let them learn to be wise by easier means : let them observe the hind of the forest, and the linnet of the grove : let them consider the life of animals, whose motions are regulated by instinct ; they obey their guide and are happy. Let us therefore, at length, cease to dispute and learn to live ; throw away the incumbrance of precepts, which they who utter them with so much pride and pomp do not understand, and carry with us this simple and intelligible maxim, That deviation from nature is deviation from happiness."

When he had spoken, he looked round him with a placid air, and enjoyed the consciousness of his own beneficence. "Sir," said the prince, with great modesty, "as I, like all the rest of mankind, am desirous of felicity, my closest attention has been fixed upon your discourse : I doubt not the truth of a position which a man so learned has so confidently advanced. Let me only know what it is to live according to nature."

"When I find young men so humble and so docile," said the philosopher, "I can deny them no information which my studies have enabled me to afford. To live according to nature, is to act always with due regard to the fitness arising from the relations and qualities of causes and effects ; to concur with the great and unchangeable scheme of universal felicity ; to co-operate with the general disposition and tendency of the present system of things."

The prince soon found that this was one of the sages whom he should understand less as he heard him longer.

He therefore bowed and was silent, and the philosopher, supposing him satisfied, and the rest vanquished, rose up and departed with the air of a man that had co-operated with the present system.

CHAP. XXIII.

THE PRINCE AND HIS SISTER DIVIDE BETWEEN THEM
THE WORK OF OBSERVATION.

RASSELAS returned home full of reflections, doubtful how to direct his future steps. Of the way to happiness he found the learned and simple equally ignorant; but, as he was yet young, he flattered himself that he had time remaining for more experiments, and further enquiries. He communicated to Imlac his observations and his doubts, but was answered by him with new doubts, and remarks that gave him no comfort. He therefore discoursed more frequently and freely with his sister, who had yet the same hope with himself, and always assisted him to give some reason why, though he had been hitherto frustrated, he might succeed at last.

“We have hitherto,” said she, “known but little of the world: we have never yet been either great or mean. In our country, though we had royalty, we had no power, and in this we have not yet seen the private recesses of domestick peace. Imlac favours not our search, lest we should in time find him mistaken. We will divide the task between us: you shall try what is to be found in the splendour of courts, and I will range the shades of humbler life. Perhaps command and authority may be the supreme blessings, as they afford most opportunities of doing good: or perhaps, what

this world can give may be found in the modest habitations of middle fortune ; too low for great designs, and too high for penury and distress."

CHAP. XXIV.

THE PRINCE EXAMINES THE HAPPINESS OF HIGH STATIONS.

RASSELAS applauded the design, and appeared next day with a splendid retinue at the court of the Bassa. He was soon distinguished for his magnificence, and admitted, as a prince whose curiosity had brought him from distant countries, to an intimacy with the great officers, and frequent conversation with the Bassa himself.

He was at first inclined to believe, that the man must be pleased with his own condition, whom all approached with reverence, and heard with obedience, and who had the power to extend his edicts to a whole kingdom. "There can be no pleasure," said he, "equal to that of feeling at once the joy of thousands all made happy by wise administration. Yet, since by the law of subordination, this sublime delight can be in one nation but the lot of one, it is surely reasonable to think, that there is some satisfaction more popular and accessible, and that millions can hardly be subjected to the will of a single man, only to fill his particular breast with incommunicable content."

These thoughts were often in his mind, and he found no solution of the difficulty. But as presents and civilities gained him more familiarity, he found that almost every man who stood high in employment hated all the rest, and was hated by them, and that their lives were a continual succession of plots and detections,

stratagems and escapes, faction and treachery. Many of those who surrounded the Bassa, were sent only to watch and report his conduct; every tongue was muttering censure, and every eye was searching for a fault.

At last the letters of revocation arrived, the Bassa was carried in chains to Constantinople, and his name was mentioned no more.

“What are we now to think of the prerogatives of power,” said Rasselas to his sister; “is it without any efficacy to good? or, is the subordinate degree only dangerous, and the supreme safe and glorious? Is the Sultan the only happy man in his dominions? or, is the Sultan himself subject to the torments of suspicion, and the dread of enemies?”

In a short time the second Bassa was deposed. The Sultan, that had advanced him, was murdered by the Janisaries, and his successor had other views and different favourites.

CHAP. XXV.

THE PRINCESS PURSUES HER ENQUIRY WITH MORE
DILIGENCE THAN SUCCESS.

THE Princess in the mean time, insinuated herself into many families; for there are few doors, through which liberality, joined with good-humour, cannot find its way. The daughters of many houses were airy and cheerful, but Nekayah had been too long accustomed to the conversation of Imlac and her brother to be much pleased with childish levity and prattle, which had no meaning. She found their thoughts narrow, their wishes low, and their merriment often artificial. Their pleasures, poor as they were, could not be preserved pure, but were embittered by petty competitions and

worthless emulation. They were always jealous of the beauty of each other ; of a quality to which solicitude can add nothing, and from which detraction can take nothing away. Many were in love with triflers like themselves, and many fancied that they were in love when in truth they were only idle. Their affection was not fixed on sense or virtue, and therefore seldom ended but in vexation. Their grief, however, like their joy was transient ; every thing floated in their mind unconnected with the past or future, so that one desire easily gave way to another, as a second stone cast into the water effaces and confounds the circles of the first.

With these girls she played as with inoffensive animals, and found them proud of her countenance, and weary of her company.

But her purpose was to examine more deeply, and her affability easily persuaded the hearts that were swelling with sorrow, to discharge their secrets in her ear : and those whom hope flattered, or prosperity delighted, often courted her to partake their pleasures.

The princess and her brother commonly met in the evening in a private summer-house on the bank of the Nile, and related to each other the occurrences of the day. As they were sitting together, the princess cast her eyes upon the river that flowed before her. " Answer," said she, " great father of waters, thou that rollest thy floods through eighty nations, to the invocations of the daughter of thy native king. Tell me if thou waterest, through all thy course, a single habitation from which thou dost not hear the murmurs of complaint.

" You are then," said Rasselas, " not more successful in private houses than I have been in courts. " I have, since the last partition of our provinces," said the

princess, "enabled myself to enter familiarly into many families, where there was the fairest shew of prosperity and peace, and know not one house that is not haunted by some fury that destroys their quiet.

"I did not seek ease among the poor, because I concluded that there it could not be found. But I saw many poor whom I had supposed to live in affluence. Poverty has, in large cities, very different appearances: it is often concealed in splendour, and often in extravagance. It is the care of a very great part of mankind to conceal their indigence from the rest: they support themselves by temporary expedients, and every day is lost in contriving for the morrow.

"This, however, was an evil, which, though frequent, I saw with less pain, because I could relieve it. Yet some have refused my bounties; more offended with my quickness to detect their wants, than pleased with my readiness to succour them: and others, whose exigencies compelled them to admit my kindness, have never been able to forgive their benefactress. Many, however, have been sincerely grateful, without the ostentation of gratitude, or the hope of other favours."

CHAP. XXVI.

THE PRINCESS CONTINUES HER REMARKS UPON PRIVATE LIFE.

NĀKAYAH perceiving her brother's attention fixed, proceeded in her narrative.

"In families, where there is or is not poverty, there is commonly discord; if a kingdom be, as Imlac tells us, a great family, a family likewise is a little kingdom, torn with factions, and exposed to revolutions. An un-

practised observer expects the love of parents and children to be constant and equal ; but this kindness seldom continues beyond the years of infancy : in a short time the children become rivals to their parents. Benefits are allayed by reproaches, and gratitude debased by envy.

“ Parents and children seldom act in concert : each child endeavours to appropriate the esteem or fondness of the parents, and the parents, with yet less temptation, betray each other to their children ; thus some place their confidence in the father, and some in the mother, and by degrees the house is filled with artifices and feuds.

“ The opinions of children and parents, of the young and the old, are naturally opposite, by the contrary effects of hope and despondence, of expectation and experience, without crime or folly on either side. The colours of life in youth and age appear different, as the face of nature in spring and winter. And how can children credit the assertions of parents, which their own eyes show them to be false ?

“ Few parents act in such a manner as much to enforce their maxims by the credit of their lives. The old man trusts wholly to slow contrivance and gradual progression : the youth expects to force his way by genius, vigour, and precipitance. The old man pays regard to riches, and the youth reverences virtue. The old man defies prudence : the youth commits himself to magnanimity and chance. The young man who intends no ill, believes that none is intended, and therefore, acts with openness and candour : but his father, having suffered the injuries of fraud, is impelled to suspect, and too often allured to practise it. Age looks with anger on the temerity of youth, and youth with contempt on the scrupulosity of age. Thus parents and children, for the greatest part, live on to love less

and less : and, if those whom nature has thus closely united are the torments of each other, where shall we look for tenderness and consolation ?

“ Surely,” said the prince, “ you must have been unfortunate in your choice of acquaintance : I am unwilling to believe, that the most tender of all relations is thus impeded in its effects by natural necessity.”

“ Domestic discord,” answered she, “ is not inevitably and fatally necessary ; but yet it is not easily avoided. We seldom see that a whole family is virtuous : the good and evil cannot well agree ; and the evil can yet less agree with one another : even the virtuous fall sometimes to variance, when their virtues are of different kinds, and tending to extremes. In general, those parents have most reverence who most deserve it : for he that lives well cannot be despised.

“ Many other evils infest private life. Some are the slaves of servants whom they have trusted with their affairs. Some are kept in continual anxiety to the caprice of rich relations, whom they cannot please, and dare not offend. Some husbands are imperious, and some wives perverse : and, as it is always more easy to do evil than good, though the wisdom or virtue of one can very rarely make many happy, the folly or vice of one may often make many miserable.”

“ If such be the general effect of marriage,” said the prince, “ I shall for the future think it dangerous to connect my interest with that of another, lest I should be unhappy by my partner’s fault.”

“ I have met,” said the princess, “ with many who live single for that reason : but I never found that their prudence ought to raise envy. They dream away their time without friendship, without fondness, and are driven to rid themselves of the day, for which they have no use, by childish amusements, or vicious delights. They

act as beings under the constant sense of some known inferiority, that fills their minds with rancour, and their tongues with censure. They are peevish at home, and malevolent abroad ; and, as the outlaws of human nature, make it their business and their pleasure to disturb that society which debars them from its privileges. To live without feeling or exciting sympathy, to be fortunate without adding to the felicity of others, or afflicted without tasting the balm of pity, is a state more gloomy than solitude : it is not retreat, but exclusion from mankind. Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures."

"What then is to be done?" said Rasselas ; "the more we inquire, the less we can resolve. Surely he is most likely to please himself, that has no other inclination to regard."

CHAP. XXVII.

DISQUISITION UPON GREATNESS.

THE conversation had a short pause. The prince, having considered his sister's observations, told her, that she had surveyed life with prejudice, and supposed misery where she did not find it. "Your narrative," says he, "throws yet a darker gloom upon the prospects of futurity : the predictions of Imlac were but faint sketches of the evils painted by Nekayah. I have been lately convinced that quiet is not the daughter of grandeur, or of power : that her presence is not to be bought by wealth, nor enforced by conquest. It is evident, that as any man acts in a wider compass, he must be more exposed to opposition from enmity, or miscarriage from chance ; whoever has many to please or to govern, must use the ministry of many agents, some

of whom will be wicked, and some, ignorant ; by some he will be misled, and by others betrayed. If he gratifies one he will offend another ; those that are not favoured will think themselves injured ; and, since favours can be conferred but upon few, the greater number will be always discontented."

" The discontent," said the princess, " which is thus unreasonable, I hope that I shall always have spirit to despise, and you power to repress."

" Discontent," answered Rasselas, " will not always be without reason under the most just and vigilant administration of publick affairs. None, however attentive, can always discover that merit which indigence or faction may happen to obscure ; and none, however powerful, can always reward it. Yet, he that sees inferior desert advanced above him, will naturally impute that preference to partiality or caprice ; and, indeed, it can scarcely be hoped that any man, however magnanimous by nature, or exalted by condition, will be able to persist for ever in the fixed and inexorable justice of distribution ; he will sometimes indulge his own affections, and sometimes those of his favourites ; he will permit some to please him who can never serve him ; he will discover in those whom he loves, qualities which in reality they do not possess ; and to those, from whom he receives pleasure, he will in his turn endeavour to give it. Thus will recommendations sometimes prevail which were purchased by money, or by the more destructive bribery of flattery and servility.

" He that has much to do will do something wrong, and of that wrong must suffer the consequences ; and, if it were possible that he should always act rightly, yet when such numbers are to judge of his conduct, the

bad will censure and obstruct him by malevolence, and the good sometimes by mistake.

“The highest stations cannot therefore hope to be the abodes of happiness, which I would willingly believe to have fled from thrones and palaces to seats of humble privacy and placid obscurity. For what can hinder the satisfaction, or intercept the expectations, of him whose abilities are adequate to his employments, who sees with his own eyes the whole circuit of his influence, who chooses by his own knowledge all whom he trusts, and whom none are tempted to deceive by hope or fear? Surely he has nothing to do but to love and to be loved, to be virtuous and to be happy.”

“Whether perfect happiness would be procured by perfect goodness,” said Nekayah, “this world will never afford an opportunity of deciding. But this, at least, may be maintained, that we do not always find visible happiness in proportion to visible virtue. All natural, and almost all political evils, are incident alike to the bad and good : they are confounded in the misery of a famine, and not much distinguished in the fury of a faction ; they sink together in a tempest, and are driven together from their country by invaders. All that virtue can afford is quietness of conscience, a steady prospect of a happier state ; this may enable us to endure calamity with patience ; but remember that patience must suppose pain.

CHAP. XXVIII.

RASSELAS AND NEKAYAH CONTINUE THEIR CONVERSATION.

“DEAR Princess,” said Rasselas, “you fall into the common errors of exaggeratory declamation, by pro-

ducing, in a familiar disquisition, examples of national calamities, and scenes of extensive misery, which are found in books rather than in the world, and which, as they are horrid, are ordained to be rare. Let us not imagine evils which we do not feel, nor injure life by misrepresentations. I cannot bear that querulous eloquence which threatens every city with a siege like that of Jerusalem, that makes famine attend on every flight of locusts, and suspends pestilence on the wing of every blast that issues from the south.

“ On necessary and inevitable evils, which overwhelm kingdoms at once, all disputation is vain : when they happen they must be endured. But it is evident, that these bursts of universal distress are more dreaded than felt ; thousands and ten thousands flourish in youth, and wither in age, without the knowledge of any other than domestick evils, and share the same pleasures and vexations, whether their kings are mild or cruel, whether the armies of their country pursue their enemies, or retreat before them. While courts are disturbed with intestine competitions, and ambassadors are negotiating in foreign countries, the smith still plies his anvil, and the husbandman drives his plough forward ; the necessaries of life are required and obtained ; and the successive business of the seasons continues to make its wonted revolutions.

“ Let us cease to consider what, perhaps, may never happen, and what, when it shall happen, will laugh at human speculation. We will not endeavour to modify the motions of the elements, or to fix the destiny of kingdoms. It is our business to consider what beings like us may perform ; each labouring for his own happiness, by promoting within his circle, however narrow, the happiness of others.

“ Marriage is evidently the dictate of nature ; men

and women are made to be the companions of each other, and therefore I cannot be persuaded but that marriage is one of the means of happiness."

"I know not," said the princess, "whether marriage be more than one of the innumerable modes of human misery. When I see and reckon the various forms of connubial infelicity, the unexpected causes of lasting discord, the diversities of temper, the oppositions of opinion, the rude collisions of contrary desire where both are urged by violent impulses, the obstinate contests of disagreeable virtues, where both are supported by consciousness of good intention; I am sometimes disposed to think with the severer casuists of most nations, that marriage is rather permitted than approved, and that none, but by the instigation of a passion too much indulged, entangle themselves with indissoluble compacts."

"You seem to forget," replied Rasselas, "that you have, even now, represented celibacy as less happy than marriage. Both conditions may be bad, but they cannot both be worst. Thus it happens when wrong opinions are entertained, that they mutually destroy each other, and leave the mind open to truth."

"I did not expect," answered the princess, "to hear that imputed to falsehood which is the consequence only of frailty. To the mind, as to the eye, it is difficult to compare with exactness objects vast in their extent, and various in their parts. Where we see or conceive the whole at once, we readily note the discriminations, and decide the preference: but of two systems, of which neither can be surveyed by any human being in its full compass of magnitude and multiplicity of complication, where is the wonder that judging of the whole by parts, I am alternately affected by one and the other as either presses on my memory or fancy? We

differ from ourselves just as we differ from each other, when we see only part of the question, as in the multifarious relations of politicks and morality ; but when we perceive the whole at once, as in numerical computations, all agree in one judgment, and none ever varies in his opinion."

" Let us not add," said the prince, " to the other evils of life, the bitterness of controversy, nor endeavour to vie with each other in subtilities of argument. We are employed in a search, of which both are equally to enjoy the success, or suffer by the miscarriage. It is therefore fit that we assist each other. You surely conclude too hastily from the infelicity of marriage against its institution : will not the misery of life prove equally that life cannot be the gift of Heaven ? The world must be peopled by marriage, or peopled without it."

" How the world is to be peopled," returned Nekayah, " is not my care, and needs not be yours. I see no danger that the present generations should omit to leave successors behind them : we are not now inquiring for the world, but for ourselves."

CHAP. XXIX.

THE DEBATE ON MARRIAGE CONTINUED.

" THE good of the whole," says Rasselas, " is the same with the good of all its parts. If marriage be best for mankind, it must be evidently best for individuals, or a permanent and necessary duty must be the cause of evil, and some must be inevitably sacrificed to the convenience of others. In the estimate which you have made of the two states, it appears that the in-commodities of a single life are, in a great measure,

necessary and certain, but those of the conjugal state accidental and unavoidable.

“ I cannot forbear to flatter myself, that prudence and benevolence will make marriage happy. The general folly of mankind is the cause of general complaint. What can be expected but disappointment and repentance from a choice made in the immaturity of youth, in the ardour of desire, without judgment, without foresight, without inquiry after conformity of opinions, similarity of manners, rectitude of judgment, or purity of sentiment ?

“ Such is the common process of marriage. A youth or maiden meeting by chance, or brought together by artifice, exchange glances, reciprocate civilities, go home and dream of one another. Having little to divert attention, or diversify thought, they find themselves uneasy when they are apart, and therefore conclude that they shall be happy together. They marry, and discover what nothing but voluntary blindness before had concealed ; they wear out life in altercations, and charge nature with cruelty.

“ From those early marriages proceeds likewise the rivalry of parents and children : the son is eager to enjoy the world before the father is willing to forsake it, and there is hardly room at once for two generations. The daughter begins to bloom before the mother can be content to fade, and neither can forbear to wish for the absence of the other.

“ Surely all these evils may be avoided by the deliberation and delay which prudence prescribes to irrevocable choice. In the variety and jollity of youthful pleasures, life may be well enough supported without the help of a partner. Longer time will increase experience, and wider views will allow better opportunities of inquiry and selection : one advantage, at least,

will be certain ; the parents will be visibly older than their children."

"What reason can collect," said Nekayah, "and what experiment has not yet taught, can be known only from the report of others. I have been told that late marriages are not eminently happy. This is a question too important to be neglected, and I have often proposed it to those, whose accuracy of remark, and comprehensiveness of knowledge, made their suffrages worthy of regard. They have generally determined, that it is dangerous for a man and woman to suspend their fate upon each other, at a time when opinions are fixed, and habits are established : when friendships have been contracted on both sides, when life has been planned into method, and the mind has long enjoyed the contemplation of its own prospects.

"It is scarcely possible that two travelling through the world under the conduct of chance, should have been both directed to the same path, and it will not often happen that either will quit the tract which custom has made pleasing. When the desultory levity of youth has settled into regularity, it is soon succeeded by pride ashamed to yield, or obstinacy delighting to contend. And even though mutual esteem produces mutual desire to please, time itself, as it modifies unchangeably the external mien, determines likewise the direction of the passions, and gives an inflexible rigidity to the manners. Long customs are not easily broken : he that attempts to change the course of his own life very often labours in vain ; and how shall we do that for others, which we are seldom able to do for ourselves ?"

"But surely," interposed the prince, "you suppose the chief motive of choice forgotten or neglected. Whenever I shall seek a wife, it shall be my first question, whether she be willing to be led by reason?"

"Thus it is," said Nekayah, "that philosophers are deceived. There are a thousand familiar disputes which reason can never decide ; questions that elude investigation and make logick ridiculous ; cases where something must be done, and where little can be said. Consider the state of mankind, and inquire how few can be supposed to act upon any occasions, whether small or great, with all the reasons of actions present to their minds. Wretched would be the pair above all names of wretchedness, who should be doomed to adjust by reason, every morning, all the minute detail of a domestick day.

"Those who marry at an advanced age, will probably escape the encroachments of their children ; but, in diminution of this advantage, they will be likely to leave them, ignorant and helpless, to a guardian's mercy : or, if that should not happen, they must at least go out of the world before they see those whom they love best either wise or great.

"From their children, if they have less to fear, they have less also to hope, and they lose without equivalent, the joys of early love, and the convenience of uniting with manners pliant, and minds susceptible of new impressions, which might wear away their dissimilarities by long cohabitation, as soft bodies, by continual attrition, conform their surfaces to each other.

"I believe it will be found that those who marry late are best pleased with their children, and those who marry early with their partners."

"The union of these two affections," said Rasselas, "would produce all that could be wished. Perhaps there is a time when marriage might unite them, a time neither too early for the father, nor too late for the husband."

"Every hour," answered the princess, "confirms

my prejudice in favour of the position so often uttered by the mouth of Imlac, 'That nature sets her gifts on the right hand and on the left.' Those conditions, which flatter hope and attract desire, are so constituted, that as we approach one, we recede from another. There are goods so opposed that we cannot seize both, but, by too much prudence, may pass between them at too great a distance to reach either. This is often the fate of long consideration; he does nothing who endeavours to do more than is allowed to humanity. Flatter not yourself with contrarieties of pleasure. Of the blessings set before you make your choice, and be content. No man can taste the fruits of autumn while he is delighting his scent with the flowers of the spring: no man can, at the same time, fill his cup from the source and from the mouth of the Nile."

CHAP. XXX.

IMLAC ENTERS, AND CHANGES THE CONVERSATION.

HERE Imlac entered and interrupted them. "Imlac," said Rasselas, "I have been taking from the princess the dismal history of private life, and am almost discouraged from further search."

"It seems to me," said Imlac, that "while you are making the choice of life, you neglect to live. You wander about a single city, which, however large and diversified, can now afford few novelties, and forget that you are in a country, famous among the earliest monarchies for the power and wisdom of its inhabitants: a country where the sciences first dawned that illuminate the world, and beyond which the arts cannot be traced of civil society or domestick life."

"The old Egyptians have left behind them monu-

ments of industry and power, before which all European magnificence is confessed to fade away. The ruins of their architecture are the schools of modern builders ; and from the wonders which time has spared, we may conjecture, though uncertainly, what it has destroyed."

" My curiosity," said Rasselas, " does not very strongly lead me to survey piles of stone, or mounds of earth ; my business is with man. I came hither not to measure fragments of temples, or trace choaked aqueducts, but to look upon the various scenes of the present world."

" The things that are now before us," said the princess, " require attention and deserve it. What have I to do with the heroes or the monuments of ancient times ? with times which never can return, and heroes whose form of life was different from all that the present condition of mankind requires or allows."

" To know any thing," returned the poet, " we must know its effects : to see men we must see their works, that we may learn what reason has dictated or passion has incited, and find what are the most powerful motives of action. To judge rightly of the present we must oppose it to the past ; for all judgment is comparative, and of the future nothing can be known. The truth is, that no mind is much employed upon the present : recollection and anticipation fill up almost all our moments. Our passions are joy and grief, love and hatred, hope and fear. Of joy and grief the past is the object, and the future of hope and fear ; even love and hatred respect the past, for the cause must have been before the effect.

" The present state of things is the consequence of the former, and it is natural to inquire what were the sources of the good that we enjoy, or the evil that we suffer. If we act only for ourselves, to neglect the

study of history is not prudent : if we are intrusted with the care of others, it is not just. Ignorance when it is voluntary, is criminal ; and he may properly be charged with evil, who refused to learn how he might prevent it.

“ There is no part of history so generally useful as that which relates the progress of the human mind, the gradual improvement of reason, the successive advances of science, the vicissitudes of learning and ignorance, which are the light and darkness of thinking beings, the extinction and resuscitation of arts, and the revolutions of the intellectual world. If accounts of battles and invasions are peculiarly the business of princes, the useful or elegant arts are not to be neglected ; those who have kingdoms to govern, have understandings to cultivate.

“ Example is always more efficacious than precept. A soldier is formed in war, and a painter must copy pictures. In this, contemplative life has the advantage : great actions are seldom seen, but the labours of art are always at hand for those who desire to know what art has been able to perform.

“ When the eye or the imagination is struck with an uncommon work, the next transition of an active mind is to the means by which it was performed. Here begins the true use of such contemplation ; we enlarge our comprehension by new ideas, and perhaps recover some art lost to mankind, or learn what is less perfectly known in our own country. At least we compare our own with former times, and either rejoice at our improvements, or what is the first motion towards good, discover our defects.”

“ I am willing,” said the prince, “ to see all that can deserve my search.” “ And I,” said the princess, “ shall rejoice to learn something of the manners of antiquity.”

“ The most pompous monument of Egyptian greatness, and one of the most bulky works of manual industry,” said Imlac, “ are the pyramids ; fabricks raised before the time of history, and of which the earliest narratives afford us only uncertain traditions. Of these, the greatest is still standing very little injured by time.”

“ Let us visit them to-morrow,” said Nekayah. “ I have often heard of the pyramids, and shall not rest till I have seen them within and without with my own eyes.”

CHAP. XXXI.

THEY VISIT THE PYRAMIDS.

THE resolution being thus taken, they set out the next day. They laid tents upon their camels, being resolved to stay among the pyramids till their curiosity was fully satisfied. They travelled gently, turned aside to every thing remarkable, stopped from time to time and conversed with the inhabitants, and observed the various appearances of towns ruined and inhabited, of wild and uncultivated nature.

When they came to the great pyramid, they were astonished at the extent of the base, and the height of the top. Imlac explained to them the principles upon which the pyramidal form was chosen for a fabrick, intended to co-extend its duration with that of the world : he shewed that its gradual diminution gave it such stability, as defeated all the common attacks of the elements, and could scarcely be overthrown by earthquakes themselves, the least resistible of natural violence. A concussion that should shatter the pyramid would threaten the dissolution of the continent.

They measured all its dimensions, and pitched their tents at its foot. Next day they prepared to enter its interior apartments, and having hired the common guides, climbed up to the first passage, when the fa-

avourite of the princess, looking into the cavity, stepped back and trembled. "Pekuah," said the princess, "of what art thou afraid?" "Of the narrow entrance," answered the lady, "and of the dreadful gloom. I dare not enter a place which must surely be inhabited by unquiet souls. The original possessors of these dreadful vaults will start up before us, and perhaps shut us in for ever." She spoke, and threw her arms round the neck of her mistress.

"If all your fear be of apparitions," said the prince, "I will promise you safety : there is no danger from the dead ; he that is once buried will be seen no more."

"That the dead are seen no more," said Imlac, "I will not undertake to maintain, against the concurrent and unvaried testimony of all ages, and of all nations. There is no people, rude or learned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed. This opinion, which perhaps prevails as far as human nature is diffused, could become universal only by its truth : those, that never heard of one another, would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience can make credible. That it is doubted by single cavillers, can very little weaken the general evidence ; and some who deny it with their tongues confess it by their fears.

"Yet I do not mean to add new terrors to those which have already seized upon Pekuah. There can be no reason why spectres should haunt the pyramid more than other places, or why they should have power or will to hurt innocence and purity. Our entrance is no violation of their privileges ; we can take nothing from them, how then can we offend them?"

"My dear Pekuah," said the princess, "I will always go before you, and Imlac shall follow you. Remember that you are the companion of the princess of Abissinia."

"If the princess is pleased that her servant should die," returned the lady, "let her command some death less dreadful than enclosure in this horrid cavern. You know I dare not disobey you : I must go if you command me ; but, if I once enter, I shall never come back."

The princess saw that her fear was too strong for expostulation or reproof, and embracing her, told her that she should stay in the tent till their return. Pekuah was not yet satisfied, but entreated the princess not to pursue so dreadful a purpose as that of entering the recesses of the pyramid. "Though I cannot teach courage," said Nekayah, "I must not learn cowardice ; nor leave at last undone what I came hither only to do."

CHAP. XXXII.

THEY ENTER THE PYRAMID.

PEKUAH descended to the tents, and the rest entered the pyramid : they passed through the galleries, surveyed the vaults of marble, and examined the chest in which the body of the founder is supposed to have been repositied. They then sat down in one of the most spacious chambers to rest awhile before they attempted to return.

"We have now," said Imlac, "gratified our minds with an exact view of the greatest work of man, except the wall of China.

"Of the wall it is very easy to assign the motive. It secured a wealthy and timorous nation from the incursions of barbarians, whose unskilfulness of arts made it easier for them to supply their wants by rapine than by industry, and who from time to time poured in upon the habitations of peaceful commerce, as vultures descended upon domestick fowl. Their celerity and fierceness made the wall necessary, and their ignorance *made it efficacious.*

“ But for the pyramids no reason has ever been given adequate to the cost and labour of the work. The narrowness of the chambers proves that it could afford no retreat from enemies, and treasures might have been repositied at far less expense with equal security. It seems to have been erected only in compliance with that hunger of imagination which preys incessantly upon life, and must be always appeased by some employment. Those who have already all that they can enjoy, must enlarge their desires. He that has built for use, till use is supplied, must begin to build for vanity, and extend his plan to the utmost power of human performance, that he may not be soon reduced to form another wish.

“ I consider this mighty structure as a monument of the insufficiency of human enjoyments. A king whose power is unlimited, and whose treasures surmount all real and imaginary wants, is compelled to solace, by the erection of a pyramid, the satiety of dominion and tastelessness of pleasures, and to amuse the tediousness of declining life, by seeing thousands labouring without end, and one stone, for no purpose, laid upon another. Whoever thou art, that, not content with a moderate condition, imaginest happiness in royal magnificence, and drest that command or riches can feed the appetite of novelty with perpetual gratifications, survey the pyramids and confess thy folly !”

CHAP. XXXIII.

THE PRINCESS MEETS WITH AN UNEXPECTED MIS-
FORTUNE.

THEY rose up, and returned through the cavity at which they had entered, and the princess prepared for her favourite a long narrative of dark labyrinths, and costly rooms, and of the different impressions which

the varieties of the way had made upon her. But when they came to their train, they found every one silent and dejected : the men discovered shame and fear in their countenances, and the women were weeping in the tents.

What had happened they did not try to conjecture, but immediately inquired. " You had scarcely entered into the pyramid," said one of the attendants, " when a troop of Arabs rushed upon us : we were too few to resist them, and too slow to escape. They were about to search the tents, set us on our camels, and drive us along before them, when the approach of some Turkish horsemen put them to flight ; but they seized the lady Pekuah with her two maids, and carried them away : the Turks are now pursuing them by our instigation, but I fear they will not be able to overtake them."

The princess was overpowered with surprise and grief. Rasselas, in the first heat of his resentment, ordered his servants to follow him, and prepared to pursue the robbers with his sabre in his hand. " Sir," said Imlac, " what can you hope from violence or valour ? the Arabs are mounted on horses trained to battle and retreat ; we have only beasts of burden. By leaving our present station we may lose the princess, but cannot hope to regain Pekuah."

In a short time the Turks returned, having not been able to reach the enemy. The princess burst out into new lamentations, and Rasselas could scarcely forbear to reproach them with cowardice ; but Imlac was of opinion that the escape of the Arabs was no addition to their misfortune, for perhaps they would have killed their captives rather than have resigned them.

CHAP. XXXIV.

THEY RETURN TO CAIRO WITHOUT PEKUAH.

THERE was nothing to be hoped from longer stay. *They* returned to Cairo repenting of their curiosity.

censuring the negligence of the government, lamenting their own rashness which had neglected to procure a guard, imagining many expedients by which the loss of Pekuah might have been prevented, and resolving to do something for her recovery, though none could find any thing proper to be done.

Nekayah retired to her chamber, where her women attempted to comfort her, by telling her that all had their troubles, and that lady Pekuah had enjoyed much happiness in the world for a long time, and might reasonably expect a change of fortune. They hoped that some good would befall her wheresoever she was, and that their mistress would find another friend who might supply her place.

The princess made them no answer, and they continued the form of condolence, not much grieved in their hearts that the favourite was lost.

Next day the prince presented to the Bassa a memorial of the wrong which he had suffered, and a petition for redress. The Bassa threatened to punish the robbers, but did not attempt to catch them, nor, indeed, could any account or description be given by which he might direct the pursuit.

It soon appeared that nothing would be done by authority. Governors, being accustomed to hear of more crimes than they can punish, and more wrongs than they can redress, set themselves at ease by indiscriminate negligence, and presently forget the request when they lose sight of the petitioner.

Imlac then endeavoured to gain some intelligence by private agents. He found many who pretended to an exact knowledge of all the haunts of the Arabs, and to regular correspondence with their chiefs, and who readily undertook the recovery of Pekuah. Of these, some were furnished with money for their journey, and

came back no more ; some were liberally paid for accounts which a few days discovered to be false. But the princess would not suffer any means, however improbable, to be left untried. While she was doing something she kept her hope alive. As one expedient failed, another was suggested ; when one messenger returned unsuccessful, another was dispatched to a different quarter.

Two months had now passed, and of Pekuah nothing had been heard ; the hopes which they had endeavoured to raise in each other grew more languid, and the princess, when she saw nothing more to be tried, sunk down inconsolable in hopeless dejection. A thousand times she reproached herself with the easy compliance, by which she permitted her favourite to stay behind her. " Had not my fondness," said she, " lessened my authority, Pekuah had not dared to talk of her terrors. She ought to have feared me more than spectres. A severe look would have overpowered her ; a peremptory command would have compelled obedience. Why did foolish indulgence prevail upon me ? Why did I not speak, and refuse to hear ? "

" Great princess," said Imlac, " do not reproach yourself for your virtue, or consider that as blameable by which evil has accidentally been caused. Your tenderness for the timidity of Pekuah was generous and kind. When we act according to our duty, we commit the event to him by whose laws our actions are governed, and who will suffer none to be finally punished for obedience. When, in prospect of some good, whether natural or moral, we break the rules prescribed us, we withdraw from the direction of superiour wisdom, and take all consequences upon ourselves. Man cannot so far know the connection of causes and events, as that he may venture to do wrong in order to do

right. When we pursue our end by lawful means, we may always console our miscarriage by the hope of future recompense. When we consult only our own policy, and attempt to find a nearer way to good, by overleaping the settled boundaries of right and wrong, we cannot be happy even by success, because we cannot escape the consciousness of our fault ; but if we miscarry the disappointment is irremediably embittered. How comfortless is the sorrow of him who feels at once the pangs of guilt, and the vexation of calamity which guilt has brought upon him ?

“ Consider, princess, what would have been your condition if the lady Pekuah had entreated to accompany you, and being compelled to stay in the tents, had been carried away ; or how would you have borne the thought, if you had forced her into the pyramid, and she had died before you in agonies of terroure ? ”

“ Had either happened,” said Nekayah, “ I could not have endured life till now : I should have been tortured to madness by the remembrance of such cruelty, or must have pined away in abhorrence of myself.”

“ This at least,” said Imlac, “ is the present reward of virtuous conduct, that no unlucky consequence can oblige us to repent it.

CHAP. XXXV.

THE PRINCESS LANGUISHES FOR WANT OF PEKUAH.

NEKAYAH being thus reconciled to herself, found that no evil is insupportable but that which is accompanied with consciousness of wrong. She was, from that time, delivered from the violence of tempestuous sorrow, and sunk into silent pensiveness and gloomy tranquillity. She sat from morning to evening recollecting all that had been done or said by her Pekuah, treasured up with care every trifle on which Pekuah

had set an accidental value, and which might recall to mind any little incident or careless conversation. The sentiments of her, whom she now expected to see no more, were treasured in her memory as rules of life, and she deliberated to no other end than to conjecture on any occasion what would have been the opinion and counsel of Pekuah.

The women, by whom she was attended, knew nothing of her real condition, and therefore she could not talk to them but with caution and reserve. She began to remit her curiosity, having no great care to collect notions which she had no convenience of uttering. Rasselas endeavoured first to comfort, and afterwards to divert her; he hired musicians, to whom she seemed to listen, but did not hear them, and procured masters to instruct her in various arts, whose lectures, when they visited her again, were again to be repeated. She had lost her taste of pleasure, and her ambition of excellence. And her mind though forced into short excursions, always recurred to the image of her friend.

Imlac was every morning earnestly enjoined to renew his enquiries, and was asked every night whether he had yet heard of Pekuah, till not being able to return the princess the answer that she desired, he was less and less willing to come into her presence. She observed his backwardness, and commanded him to attend her. "You are not," said she, "to confound impatience with resentment, or to suppose that I charge you with negligence, because I repine at your unsuccessfulness. I do not much wonder at your absence; I know that the unhappy are never pleasing, and that all naturally avoid the contagion of misery. To hear complaints is wearisome alike to the wretched and the happy; for who would cloud, by adventitious grief, the short gleams of gaiety which life allows us? or who,

that is struggling under his own evils, will add to them the miseries of another ?

“ The time is at hand, when none shall be disturbed any longer by the sighs of Nekayah : my search after happiness is now at an end. I am resolved to retire from the world with all its flatteries and deceits, and will hide myself in solitude without any other care than to compose my thoughts, and regulate my hours by a constant succession of innocent occupations, till, with a mind purified from all earthly desires, I shall enter into that state, to which all are hastening, and in which I hope again to enjoy the friendship of Pekuah.”

“ Do not entangle your mind,” said Imlac, “ by irrevocable determinations, nor increase the burden of life by a voluntary accumulation of misery : the weariness of retirement will continue or increase when the loss of Pekuah is forgotten. That you have been deprived of one pleasure, is no very good reason for rejecting of the rest.”

“ Since Pekuah was taken from me,” said the princess, “ I have no pleasure to reject or to retain. She that has no one to love or trust has little to hope. She wants the radical principle of happiness. We may, perhaps, allow that what satisfaction this world can afford, must arise from the conjunction of wealth, knowledge, and goodness. Wealth is nothing but as it is bestowed, and knowledge nothing but as it is communicated : they must therefore be imparted to others, and to whom could I now delight to impart them ? Goodness affords the only comfort which can be enjoyed without a partner, and goodness may be practised in retirement.”

“ How far solitude may admit goodness, or advance it, I shall not,” replied Imlac, “ dispute at present. Remember the confession of the pious hermit. You

will wish to return into the world, when the image of your companion has left your thoughts." "That time," said Nekayah, "will never come. The generous frankness, the modest obsequiousness, and the faithful secrecy of my dear Pekuah, will always be more missed, as I shall live longer to see vice and folly."

"The state of a mind oppressed with a sudden calamity," said Imlac, "is like that of the fabulous inhabitants of the new-created earth, who, when the first night came upon them, supposed that day would never return. When the clouds of sorrow gather over us, we see nothing beyond them, nor can imagine how they will be dispelled : yet a new day succeeded to the night, and sorrow is never long without a dawn of ease. But they who restrain themselves from receiving comfort, do as the savages would have done, had they put out their eyes when it was dark. Our minds like our bodies, are in continual flux ; something is hourly lost, and something acquired. To lose much at once is inconvenient to either, but while the vital powers remain uninjured, nature will find the means of reparation. Distance has the same effect on the mind as on the eye, and while we glide along the stream of time, whatever we leave behind us is always lessening, and that which we approach increasing in magnitude. Do not suffer life to stagnate ; it will grow muddy for want of motion : commit yourself again to the current of the world ; Pekuah will vanish by degrees : you will meet in your way some other favourite, or learn to diffuse yourself in general conversation."

"At least," said the prince, "do not despair before all remedies have been tried ; the inquiry after the unfortunate lady is still continued, and shall be carried on with yet greater diligence, on condition that you will promise to wait a year for the event, without any unalterable resolution."

Nekayah thought this a reasonable demand, and made the promise to her brother, who had been advised by Imlac to require it. Imlac had indeed, no great hope of regaining Pekuah, but he supposed, that if he could secure the interval of a year, the princess would be then in no danger of a cloister.

CHAP. XXXVI.

PEKUAH IS STILL REMEMBERED. THE PROGRESS OF
SORROW.

NEKAYAH, seeing that nothing was omitted for the recovery of her favourite, and having, by her promise, set her intention of retirement at a distance, began imperceptibly to return to common cares and common pleasures. She rejoiced without her own consent at the suspension of her sorrows, and sometimes caught herself with indignation in the act of turning away her mind from the remembrance of her, whom yet she resolved never to forget.

She then appointed a certain hour of the day for meditation on the merits and fondness of Pekuah, and for some weeks retired constantly at the time fixed, and returned with her eyes swollen and her countenance clouded. By degrees she grew less scrupulous, and suffered any important and pressing avocation to delay the tribute of daily tears. She then yielded to less occasions ; sometimes forgot what she was indeed afraid to remember, and at last, wholly released herself from the duty of periodical affliction.

Her real love of Pekuah was yet not diminished. A thousand occurrences brought her back to memory, and a thousand wants, which nothing but the confidence of friendship can supply, made her frequently regretted. She therefore solicited Imlac never to desist from inquiry, and to leave no art or intelligence untried, that,

at least, she might have the comfort of knowing that she did not suffer by negligence or sluggishness. "Yet what," said she, "is to be expected from our pursuit of happiness, when we find the state of life to be such, that happiness itself is the cause of misery? Why should we endeavour to attain that, of which the possession cannot be secured? I shall henceforward fear to yield my heart to excellence, however bright, or to fondness, however tender, lest I should lose again what I have lost in Pekuah."

CHAP. XXXVII.

THE PRINCESS HEARS NEWS OF PEKUAH.

IN seven months, one of the messengers, who had been sent away upon the day when the promise was drawn from the princess, returned, after many unsuccessful rambles from the borders of Nubia, with an account that Pekuah was in the hands of an Arab chief, who possessed a castle or fortress on the extremity of Egypt. The Arab, whose revenue was plunder, was willing to restore her, with her two attendants, for two hundred ounces of gold.

The price was no subject of debate. The princess was in ecstasies when she heard that her favourite was alive, and might so cheaply be ransomed. She could not think of delaying for a moment Pekuah's happiness or her own, but entreated her brother to send back the messenger with the sum required. Imlac being consulted, was not very confident of the veracity of the relator, and was still more doubtful of the Arab's faith, who might, if he were too liberally trusted, detain at once the money and the captives. He thought it dangerous to put themselves in the power of the Arab, by going into his district, and could not expect that the *Rover* would so much expose himself as to come into

the lower country, where he might be seized by the forces of the Bassa.

It is difficult to negotiate where neither will trust. But Imlac, after some deliberation, directed the messenger to propose that Pekuah should be conducted by ten horsemen to the monastery of St. Antony, which is situated in the deserts of Upper Egypt, where she should be met by the same number, and her ransom should be paid.

That no time might be lost, as they expected that the proposal would not be refused, they immediately began their journey to the monastery; and when they arrived, Imlac went forward with the former messenger to the Arab's fortress. Rasselas was desirous to go with them; but neither his sister nor Imlac would consent. The Arab, according to the custom of his nation, observed the laws of hospitality with great exactness to those who put themselves into his power, and in a few days, brought Pekuah with her maids, by easy journies, to the place appointed, where receiving the stipulated price, he restored her with great respect to liberty and her friends, and undertook to conduct them back towards Cairo beyond all danger of robbery or violence.

The princess and her favourite embraced each other with transport too violent to be expressed, and went out together to pour the tears of tenderness in secret, and exchange professions of kindness and gratitude. After a few hours they returned into the refectory of the convent, where, in the presence of the prior and his brethren, the prince required of Pekuah the history of her adventures.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE LADY PEKUAH.

“AT what time, and in what manner, I was forced away,” said Pekuah, “your servants have told you. The suddenness of the event struck me with surprise, and I was at first rather stupified than agitated with any passion of either fear or sorrow. My confusion was increased by the speed and tumult of our flight, while we were followed by the Turks, who, as it seemed, soon despaired to overtake us, or were afraid of those whom they made a shew of menacing.

“When the Arabs saw themselves out of danger, they slackened their course, and as I was less harrassed by external violence, I began to feel more uneasiness in my mind. After some time we stopped near a spring shaded with trees in a pleasant meadow, where we were set upon the ground, and offered such refreshments as our masters were partaking. I was suffered to sit with my maids apart from the rest, and none attempted to comfort or insult us. Here I first began to feel the full weight of my misery. The girls sat weeping in silence, and from time to time looked on me for succour. I know not to what condition we were doomed, nor could conjecture where would be the place of our captivity, or whence to draw any hope of deliverance. I was in the hands of robbers and savages, and had no reason to suppose that their pity was more than their justice, or that they would forbear the gratification of any ardour of desire, or caprice of cruelty. I, however kissed my maids, and endeavoured to pacify them by remarking, that we were yet treated with decency, and that, since we were now carried beyond pursuit, there was no danger of violence to our lives.

“When we were to be set again on horseback, my

maids clung round me, and refused to be parted, but I commanded them not to irritate those who had us in their power. We travelled the remaining part of the day through an unfrequented and pathless country, and came by moon-light to the side of a hill, where the rest of the troop was stationed. Their tents were pitched, and their fires kindled, and our chief was welcomed as a man much beloved by his dependants.

"We were received into a large tent, where we found women who attended their husbands in the expedition. They set before us the supper which they had provided, and I eat it rather to encourage my maids than to comply with any appetite of my own. When the meat was taken away, they spread the carpet for repose. I was weary, and hoped to find in sleep that remission of distress which nature seldom denies. Ordering myself therefore to be undrest, I observed that the women looked very earnestly upon me, not expecting, I suppose, to see me so submissively attended. When my upper vestment was taken off, they were apparently struck with the splendour of my clothes, and one of them timorously laid her hand upon the embroidery. She then went out, and in a short time came back with another woman, who seemed to be of higher rank, and greater authority. She did, at her entrance, the usual act of reverence, and taking me by the hand, placed me in a smaller tent, spread with finer carpets, where I spent the night quietly with my maids.

"In the morning as I was sitting on the grass, the chief of the troop came towards me. I rose up to receive him, and he bowed with great respect. "Illustrious lady," said he, "my fortune is better than I presumed to hope; I am told by my women, that I have a princess in my camp." "Sir," answered I, "your women have deceived themselves and you; I am not a prin-

cess, but an unhappy stranger who intended soon to have left this country, in which I am now to be imprisoned for ever." "Whoever, or whencesoever you are," returned the Arab, "your dress, and that of your servants, shew your rank to be high, and your wealth to be great. Why should you, who can so easily procure your ransom, think yourself in danger of perpetual captivity? The purpose of my incursions is to increase my riches, or, more properly, to gather tribute. The sons of Ishmael are the natural and hereditary lords of this part of the continent which is usurped by late invaders, and low-born tyrants, from whom we are compelled to take by the sword what is denied to justice. The violence of war admits no distinction: the lance that is lifted at guilt and power, will sometimes fall on innocence and gentleness!"

"How little," said I, "did I expect that yesterday it should have fallen upon me!"

"Misfortunes," answered the Arab, "should always be expected. If the eye of hostility could learn reverence or pity, excellence like yours had been exempt from injury. But the angels of affliction spread their toils alike for the virtuous and the wicked, for the mighty and the mean. Do not be disconsolate: I am not one of the lawless and cruel rovers of the desert; I know the rules of civil life: I will fix your ransom, and give a passport to your messenger, and perform my stipulation with nice punctuality."

"You will easily believe that I was pleased with his courtesy: and finding that his predominant passion was desire of money, I began now to think my danger less, for I knew that no sum would be thought too great for the release of Pekuah. I told him that he should have no reason to charge me with ingratitude, if I was used with kindness, and that any ransom which could

be expected for a maid of common rank, would be paid; but that he must not persist to rate me as a princess. He said, he would consider what he should demand, and then smiling, bowed and retired.

“ Soon after the women came about me, each contending to be more officious than the other, and my maids themselves were served with reverence. We travelled onward by short journeys. On the fourth day the chief told me, that my ransom must be two hundred ounces of gold; which I not only promised him, but told him, that I would add fifty more, if I and my maids were honourably treated.

“ I never knew the power of gold before. From that time I was the leader of the troop. The march of every day was longer or shorter, as I commanded, and the tents were pitched where I chose to rest. We now had camels and other conveniencies for travel, my own women were always at my side, and I amused myself with observing the manners of the vagrant nations, and with viewing remains of ancient edifices, with which these deserted countries appear to have been, in some distant age, lavishly embellished.

“ The chief of the band was a man far from illiterate: he was able to travel by the stars or the compass, and had marked in his erratick expeditions, such places as are most worthy the notice of a passenger. He observed to me, that buildings are always best preserved in places little frequented, and difficult of access: for, when once a country declines from its primitive splendour the more inhabitants are left, the quicker ruin will be made. Walls supply stones more easily than quarries, and palaces and temples will be demolished, to make stables of granate, and cottages of porphyry.

CHAP. XXXIX.

THE ADVENTURES OF PEKUAH CONTINUED.

“ WE wandered about in this manner for some weeks, whether, as our chief pretended, for my gratification, or, as I rather suspected, for some convenience of his own. I endeavoured to appear contented where sullenness and resentment would have been of no use, and that endeavour conduced much to the calmness of my mind ; but my heart was always with Nekayah, and the troubles of the night much overbalanced the amusements of the day. My women, who threw all their cares upon their mistress, set their minds at ease from the time when they saw me treated with respect, and gave themselves up to the incidental alleviations of our fatigue without solicitude or sorrow. I was pleased with their pleasure, and animated with their confidence. My condition had lost much of its terroure, since I found that the Arab ranged the country merely to get riches. Avarice is an uniform and tractable vice : other intellectual distempers are different in different constitutions of mind ; that which soothes the pride of one will offend the pride of another ; but to the favour of the covetous there is a ready way ; bring money and nothing is denied.

“ At last we came to the dwelling of our chief, a strong and spacious house, built with stone in an island of the Nile, which lies, as I was told, under the tropick. “ Lady,” said the Arab, “ you shall rest after your journey a few weeks in this place, where you are to consider yourself as sovereign. My occupation is war : I have therefore chosen this obscure residence, from which I can issue unexpected, and to which I can retire unpursued. You may now repose in security : here are few pleasures, but here is no danger.” He

then led me into the inner apartments, and seating me on the richest couch, bowed to the ground. His women, who considered me as a rival, looked on me with malignity ; but being soon informed that I was a great lady detained only for my ransom, they began to vie with each other in obsequiousness and reverence.

“ Being again comforted with new assurances of speedy liberty, I was for some days diverted from impatience by the novelty of the place. The turrets overlooked the country to a great distance and afforded a view of many windings of the stream. In the day I wandered from one place to another, as the course of the sun varied the splendour of the prospect, and saw many things which I had never seen before. The crocodiles and river-horses are common in this unpeopled region, and I often looked upon them with terrour, though I knew that they could not hurt me. For some time I expected to see mermaids and tritons, which, as Imlac has told me, the European travellers have stationed in the Nile, but no such beings ever appeared, and the Arab, when I inquired after them, laughed at my credulity.

“ At night the Arab always attended me to a tower set apart for celestial observations, where he endeavoured to teach me the names and courses of the stars. I had no great inclination to this study, but an appearance of attention was necessary to please my instructor, who valued himself for his skill ; and in a little while I found some employment requisite to beguile the tediousness of time, which was to be passed always amidst the same objects. I was weary of looking in the morning on things from which I had turned away weary in the evening : I therefore was at last willing to observe the stars rather than do nothing, but could not always compose my thoughts, and was very often thinking on

Nekayah, when others imagined me contemplating the sky. Soon after the Arab went upon another expedition, and then my only pleasure was to talk with my maids about the accident by which we were carried away, and the happiness that we should all enjoy at the end of our captivity."

"There were women in your Arab's fortress," said the princes, "why did you not make them your companions, enjoy their conversation, and partake their diversions? In a place where they found business or amusement, why should you alone sit corroded with idle melancholy? or why could not you bear, for a few months, that condition to which they were condemned for life?"

"The diversions of the women," answered Pekuah, "were only childish play, by which the mind, accustomed to stronger operations, could not be kept busy. I could do all which they delighted in doing, by powers merely sensitive, while my intellectual faculties were flown to Cairo. They ran from room to room as a bird hops from wire to wire in his cage. They danced for the sake of motion, as lambs frisk in a meadow. One sometimes pretended to be hurt, that the rest might be alarmed; or hid herself, that another might seek her. Part of their time passed in watching the progress of light bodies that floated on the river, and part in marking the various forms into which clouds broke in the sky.

"Their business was only needle-work, in which I and my maids sometimes helped them; but you know that the mind will easily straggle from the finger, nor will you suspect that captivity and absence from Nekayah could receive solace from silken flowers.

"Nor was much satisfaction to be hoped from their conversation: for of what could they be expected to talk? They had seen nothing; for they had lived from

early youth in that narrow spot : of what they had not seen they could have no knowledge, for they could not read. They had no ideas but of the few things that were within their view, and had hardly names for any thing but their clothes and their food. As I bore a superior character, I was often called to terminate their quarrels, which I decided as equitably as I could. If it could have amused me to hear the complaints of each against the rest, I might have been often detained by long stories : but the motives of their animosity were so small that I could not listen without intercepting the tale."

"How," said Rasselas, "can the Arab whom you represented as a man of more than common accomplishments, take any pleasure in his seraglio, when it is filled only with women like these ? Are they exquisitely beautiful ?"

"They do not," said Pekuah, "want that unaffected and ignoble beauty which may subsist without sprightliness or sublimity, without energy of thought or dignity of virtue. But to a man like the Arab, such beauty was only a flower casually plucked and carelessly thrown away. Whatever pleasures he might find among them, they were not those of friendship or society. When they were playing about him he looked on them with inattentive superiority : when they vied for his regard, he sometimes turned away disgusted. As they had no knowledge, their talk could take nothing from the tediousness of life : as they had no choice, their fondness, or appearance of fondness, excited in him neither pride nor gratitude : he was not exalted in his own esteem by the smiles of a woman who saw no other man, nor was much obliged by that regard, of which he could never know the sincerity, and which he might often perceive to be exerted, not so much to de-

light him as to pain a rival. That which he gave, and they received, as love, was only a careless distribution of superfluous time, such love as man can bestow upon that which he despises, such has neither hope nor fear, neither joy nor sorrow."

"You have reason, lady, to think yourself happy," said Imlac, "that you have been thus easily dismissed. How could a mind, hungry for knowledge, be willing, in an intellectual famine, to lose such a banquet as Pekuah's conversation?"

"I am inclined to believe," answered Pekuah, "that he was for some time in suspense : for, notwithstanding his promise, whenever I proposed to dispatch a messenger to Cairo, he found some excuse for delay. While I was detained in his house he made many incursions into the neighbouring countries, and, perhaps, he would have refused to discharge me, had his plunder been equal to his wishes. He returned always courteous, related his adventures, delighted to hear my observations, and endeavoured to advance my acquaintance with the stars. When I importuned him to send away my letters, he soothed me with professions of honour and sincerity ; and when I could be no longer decently denied, put his troop again in motion, and left me to govern in his absence. I was much afflicted by this studied procrastination, and was sometimes afraid that I should be forgotten ; that you would leave Cairo, and I must end my days in an island of the Nile.

"I grew at last hopeless and dejected, and cared so little to entertain him, that he for a while more frequently talked with my maids. That he should fall in love with them, or with me, might have been equally fatal, and I was not much pleased with the growing friendship. My anxiety was not long : for as I recovered some degree of cheerfulness, he returned to me, and I *could not* forbear to despise my former uneasiness.

“ He still delayed to send for my ransom, and would, perhaps, never have determined, had not your agent found his way to him. The gold, which he would not fetch, he could not reject when it was offered. He hastened to prepare for our journey hither, like a man delivered from the pain of an intestine conflict. I took leave of my companions in the house, who dismissed me with cold indifference.”

Nekayah having heard her favourite's relation, rose and embraced her, and Rasselas gave her an hundred ounces of gold, which she presented to the Arab for the fifty that were promised.

CHAP. XL.

THE HISTORY OF A MAN OF LEARNING.

THEY returned to Cairo, and were so well pleased at finding themselves together, that none of them went much abroad. The prince began to love learning, and one day declared to Imlac, that he intended to devote himself to science, and pass the rest of his days in literary solitude.

“ Before you make your final choice,” answered Imlac, “ you ought to examine its hazards, and converse with some of those who are grown old in the company of themselves. I have just left the observatory of one of the most learned astronomers in the world, who has spent forty years in unwearied attention to the motions and appearances of the celestial bodies, and has drawn out his soul in endless calculations. He admits a few friends once a month to hear his deductions and enjoy his discoveries. I was introduced as a man of knowledge worthy of his notice. Men of various ideas, and fluent conversation, are commonly welcome to those whose thoughts have been long fixed upon a single point, and who find the images of other things stealing

away. I delighted him with my remarks ; he smiled at the narrative of my travels, and was glad to forget the constellations, and descend for a moment into the lower world.

“ On the next day of vacation I renewed my visit, and was so fortunate as to please him again. He relaxed from that time the severity of his rule, and permitted me to enter at my own choice. I found him always busy, and always glad to be relieved. As each knew much which the other was desirous of learning, we exchanged our notions with great delight. I perceived that I had every day more of his confidence, and always found new cause of admiration in the profundity of his mind. His comprehension is vast, his memory capacious and retentive, his discourse is methodical, and his expression clear.

“ His integrity and benevolence are equal to his learning. His deepest researches and most favourite studies, are willingly interrupted for any opportunity of doing good by his counsel or his riches. To his closest retreat, at his most busy moments, all are admitted that want his assistance : ‘ For though I exclude idleness and pleasure, I will never,’ says he, ‘ bar my doors against charity. To man is permitted the contemplation of the skies, but the practice of virtue is commanded.’ ”

“ Surely,” said the princess, “ this man is happy !”

“ I visited him,” said Imlac, “ with more and more frequency, and was every time more enamoured of his conversation : he was sublime without haughtiness, courteous without formality, and communicative without ostentation. I was at first, great princess, of your opinion, thought him the happiest of mankind, and often congratulated him on the blessing that he enjoyed. He seemed to hear nothing with indifference but

the praises of his condition, to which he always returned a general answer, and diverted the conversation to some other topick.

“ Amidst this willingness to be pleased, and labour to please, I had quickly reason to imagine that some painful sentiment pressed upon his mind. He often looked up earnestly towards the sun, and let his voice fall in the midst of his discourse. He would sometimes, when we were alone, gaze upon me in silence with the air of a man who longed to speak what he has yet resolved to suppress. He would often send for me with vehement injunctions of haste, though, when I came to him, he had nothing extraordinary to say. And sometimes, when I was leaving him, would call me back, pause a few moments, and then dismiss me.”

CHAP. XLI.

THE ASTRONOMER DISCOVERS THE CAUSE OF HIS UNEASINESS.

“ AT last the time came when the secret burst his reserve. We were sitting together last night in the turret of his house, watching the emersion of a satellite of Jupiter. A sudden tempest clouded the sky, and disappointed our observation. We sat awhile silent in the dark, and then he addressed himself to me in these words : ‘ Imlac, I have long considered thy friendship as the greatest blessing of my life. Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful. I have found in thee all the qualities requisite for trust, benevolence, experience, and fortitude. I have long discharged an office which I must soon quit at the call of nature, and shall rejoice in the hour of imbecility and pain to devolve it upon thee.’

“ I thought myself honoured by this testimony, and

protested that whatever could conduce to his happiness would add likewise to mine.

“Hear, Imlac, what thou wilt not without difficulty credit. I have possessed for five years the regulation of weather, and the distribution of the seasons : the sun has listened to my dictates, and passed from tropick to tropick by my direction ; the clouds, at my call, have poured their waters, and the Nile has overflowed at my command ; I have restrained the rage of the dog-star, and mitigated the fervours of the crab. The winds alone, of all the elemental powers, have hitherto refused my authority, and multitudes have perished by equinoctial tempests, which I found myself unable to prohibit or restrain. I have administered this great office with exact justice, and made to the different nations of the earth an impartial dividend of rain and sunshine. What must have been the misery of half the globe, if I had limited the clouds to particular regions, or confined the sun to either side of the equator !”

CHAP. XLII.

THE OPINION OF THE ASTRONOMER IS EXPLAINED AND JUSTIFIED.

“I suppose he discovered in me, through the obscurity of the room, some tokens of amazement and doubt, for, after a short pause, he proceeded thus :”

“Not to be easily credited will neither surprise nor offend me ; for I am probably, the first of human beings to whom this trust has been imparted. Nor do I know whether to deem this distinction a reward or punishment ; since I have possessed it I have been far less happy than before, and nothing but the consciousness of good intention could have enabled me to support the weariness of unremitted vigilance.”

“How long, Sir,” said I, “has this great office been in your hands ?”

"About ten years ago," said he, "my daily observations of the changes of the sky led me to consider, whether, if I had the power of the seasons, I could confer greater plenty upon the inhabitants of the earth. This contemplation fastened on my mind, and I sat days and nights in imaginary dominion, pouring upon this country and that the showers of fertility, and seconding every fall of rain with a due proportion of sunshine. I had yet only the will to do good, and did not imagine that I should ever have the power.

"One day, as I was looking on the fields withering with heat, I felt in my mind a sudden wish that I could send rain on the southern mountains, and raise the Nile to an inundation. In the hurry of my imagination, I commanded rain to fall, and by comparing the time of my command with that of the inundation, I found that the clouds had listened to my lips."

"Might not some other cause," said I, "produce this concurrence? the Nile does not always rise on the same day."

"Do not believe," said he, with impatience, "that such objections could escape me; I reasoned long against my own conviction, and laboured against truth with the utmost obstinacy. I sometimes suspected myself of madness, and should not have dared to impart this secret but to a man like you, capable of distinguishing the wonderful from the impossible, and the incredible from the false."

"Why, Sir," said I, "do you call that incredible, which you know, or think you know, to be true?"

"Because," said he, "I cannot prove it by any external evidence; and I know too well the laws of demonstration to think that my conviction ought to influence another, who cannot, like me, be conscious of its force. I, therefore, shall not attempt to gain credit by

disputation. It is sufficient that I feel this power, that I have long possessed, and every day exerted it. But the life of man is short, the infirmities of age increase upon me, and the time will soon come, when the regulator of the year must mingle with the dust. The care of appointing a successor has long disturbed me ; the night and the day have been spent in comparisons of all the characters which have come to my knowledge, and I have yet found none so worthy as thyself."

CHAP. XLIII.

THE ASTRONOMER LEAVES IMLAC HIS DIRECTIONS.

"HEAR, therefore, what I shall impart with attention, such as the welfare of a world requires. If the task of a king be considered as difficult, who has the care only of a few millions, to whom he cannot do much good or harm, what must be the anxiety of him, on whom depends the action of the elements, and the great gifts of light and heat !—Hear me therefore with attention.

"I have diligently considered the position of the earth and sun, and formed innumerable schemes in which I changed their situation. I have sometimes turned aside the axis of the earth, and sometimes varied the ecliptick of the sun : but I have found it impossible to make a disposition by which the world may be advantaged ; what one region gains, another loses by an imaginable alteration, even without considering the distant parts of the solar system with which we are unacquainted. Do not, therefore, in thy administration of the year, indulge thy pride by innovation ; do not please thyself with thinking that thou canst make thyself renowned to all future ages, by disordering the seasons. The memory of mischief is no desirable fame.

Much less will it become thee to let kindness or interest prevail. Never rob other countries of rain to pour it on thine own. For us the Nile is sufficient."

"I promised that when I possessed the power, I would use it with inflexible integrity ; and he dismissed me, pressing my hand." "My heart," said he, "will be now at rest, and my benevolence will no more destroy my quiet ; I have found a man of wisdom and virtue, to whom I can cheerfully bequeath the inheritance of the sun."

The prince heard this narration with very serious regard ; but the princess smiled, and Pekuah convulsed herself with laughter. "Ladies," said Imlac, "to mock the heaviest of human afflictions is neither charitable nor wise. Few can attain this man's knowledge, and few practise his virtues ; but all may suffer his calamity. Of the uncertainties of our present state, the most dreadful and alarming is the uncertain continuance of reason."

The princess was recollected, and the favourite was abashed. Rasselas, more deeply affected, inquired of Imlac, whether he thought such maladies of the mind frequent, and how they were contracted ?

CHAP. XLIV.

THE DANGEROUS PREVALENCE OF IMAGINATION.

"DISORDERS of intellect, answered Imlac, happen much more often than superficial observers will easily believe. Perhaps, if we speak with rigorous exactness, no human mind is in its right state. There is no man whose imagination does not sometimes predominate over his reason, who can regulate his attention wholly by his will, and whose ideas will come and go at his command. No man will be found in whose mind airy notions do not sometimes tyrannize, and force him to

hope or fear beyond the limits of sober probability. All power of fancy over reason is a degree of insanity ; but while this power is such as we can control and repress, it is not visible to others, nor considered as any depravation of the mental faculties : it is not pronounced madness but when it becomes ungovernable, and apparently influences speech or action.

“ To indulge the power of fiction, and send imagination out upon the wing, is often the sport of those who delight too much in silent speculation. When we are alone we are not always busy ; the labour of excogitation is too violent to last long ; the ardour of inquiry will sometimes give way to idleness or satiety. He who has nothing external that can divert him must find pleasure in his own thoughts and must conceive himself what he is not ; for who is pleased with what he is ? He then expiates in boundless futurity, and culls from all imaginable conditions that which for the present moment he should most desire, amuses his desires with impossible enjoyments, and confers upon his pride unattainable dominion. The mind dances from scene to scene, unites all pleasures in all combinations, and riots in delights, which nature and fortune, with all their bounty, cannot bestow.

“ In time, some particular train of ideas fixes the attention, all other intellectual gratifications are rejected, the mind, in weariness or leisure, recurs constantly to the favourite conception, and feasts on the luscious falsehood, whenever she is offended with the bitterness of truth. By degrees the reign of fancy is confirmed : she grows first imperious, and in time despotick. Then fictions begin to operate as realities, false opinions fasten upon the mind, and life passes in dreams of rapture or of anguish.

“ This, Sir, is one of the dangers of solitude, which

the hermit has confessed not always to promote goodness, and the astronomer's misery has proved to be not always propitious to wisdom."

"I will no more," said the favourite, "imagine myself the queen of Abissinia. I have often spent the hours, which the princess gave to my own disposal, in adjusting ceremonies and regulating the court : I have repressed the pride of the powerful, and granted the petitions of the poor ; I have built new palaces in more happy situations, planted groves upon the tops of mountains, and have exulted in the beneficence of royalty, till, when the princess entered, I had almost forgotten to bow down before her."

"And I," said the princess, "will not allow myself any more to play the shepherdess in my waking dreams. I have often soothed my thoughts with the quiet and innocence of pastoral employments, till I have in my chamber heard the winds whistle, and the sheap bleat : sometimes freed the lamb entangled in the thicket, and sometimes with my crook encountered the wolf. I have a dress like that of the village maids, which I put on to help my imagination, and a pipe on which I play softly, and suppose myself followed by my flocks."

"I will confess," said the prince, "an indulgence of fantastick delight more dangerous than yours. I have frequently endeavoured to image the possibility of a perfect government, by which all wrong should be restrained, all vice reformed, and all the subjects preserved in tranquillity and innocence. This thought produced innumerable schemes of reformation, and dictated many useful regulations and salutary edicts. This has been the sport, and sometimes the labour, of my solitude ; and I start, when I think with how little anguish I once supposed the death of my father and my brothers."

"Such," says Imlac, "are the effects of visionary schemes : when we first form them we know them to be absurd, but familiarize them by degrees, and in time lose sight of their folly."

CHAP. XLV.

THEY DISCOURSE WITH AN OLD MAN.

THE evening was now far past, and they rose to return home. As they walked along the bank of the Nile, delighted with the beams of the moon quivering on the water, they saw at a small distance an old man whom the prince had often heard in the assembly of the sages. "Yonder," said he, "is one whose years have calmed his passions, but not clouded his reason ; let us close the disquisitions of the night, by inquiring what are his sentiments of his own state, that we may know whether youth alone is to struggle with vexation, and whether any better hope remains for the latter part of life."

Here the sage approached and saluted them. They invited him to join their walk, and prattled a while, a acquaintance that had unexpectedly met one another. The old man was cheerful and talkative, and the way seemed short in his company. He was pleased to find himself not disregarded, accompanied them to their house, and, at the prince's request, entered with them. They placed him in the seat of honour, and set wine and conserves before him.

"Sir," said the princess, "an evening walk must give to a man of learning, like you, pleasures which ignorance and youth can hardly conceive. You know the qualities and the causes of all that you behold, the laws by which the river flows, the periods in which the planets perform their revolutions. Every thing must supply you with contemplation, and renew the consciousness of your own dignity."

"Lady," answered he, "let the gay and the vigorous expect pleasure in their excursions ; it is enough that age can obtain ease. To me the world has lost its novelty : I look round, and see what I remember to have seen in happier days. I rest against a tree, and consider that in the same shade I once disputed upon the annual overflow of the Nile with a friend who is now silent in the grave. I cast my eyes upwards, fix them on the changing moon, and think with pain on the vicissitudes of life. I have ceased to take much delight in physical truth ; for what have I to do with those things which I am soon to leave."

"You may at least recreate yourself," said Imlac, "with the recollection of an honourable and useful life, and enjoy the praise which all agree to give you."

"Praise," said the sage, with a sigh, "is to an old man an empty sound. I have neither mother to be delighted with the reputation of her son, nor wife to partake the honours of her husband. I have outlived my friends and my rivals. Nothing is now of much importance ; for I cannot extend my interest beyond myself. Youth is delighted with applause, because it is considered as the earnest of some future good, and because the prospect of life is far extended : but to me, who am now declining to decrepitude, there is little to be feared from the malevolence of men, and yet less to be hoped from their affection or esteem. Something they may yet take away, but they can give nothing. Riches would now be useless, and high employment would be pain. My retrospect of life recalls to my view many opportunities of good neglected, much time squandered upon trifles, and more lost in idleness and vacancy. I leave many great designs unattempted, and many great attempts unfinished. My mind is burdened with no heavy crime, and therefore I compose myself to

tranquillity ; endeavour to abstract my thoughts from hopes and cares, which, though reason knows them to be vain, still try to keep their old possession of the heart : expect, with serene humility, that hour which nature cannot long delay ; and hope to possess, in a better state, that happiness which here I could not find, and that virtue which here I have not attained."

He rose and went away, leaving his audience not much elated with the hope of long life. The prince consoled himself with remarking, that it was not reasonable to be disappointed by this account : for age had never been considered as the season of felicity, and if it was possible to be easy in decline and weakness, it was likely that the days of vigour and alacrity might be happy : that the noon of life might be bright if the evening could be calm.

The princess suspected that age was querulous and malignant, and delighted to repress the expectations of those who had newly entered the world. She had seen the possessors of estates look with envy on their heirs, and known many who enjoyed pleasure no longer than they can confine it to themselves.

Pekuah conjectured, that the man was older than he appeared, and was willing to impute his complaints to delirious dejection : or else supposed that he had been unfortunate, and was therefore discontented : " For nothing," said she, " is more common, than to call our own condition, the condition of life."

Imlac, who had no desire to see them depressed, smiled at the comforts, which they could so readily procure to themselves, and remembered, that at the same age, he was equally confident of unmingled prosperity, and equally fertile of consolatory expedients. He forbore to force upon them unwelcome knowledge, which time itself would too soon impress. The prin-

cess and her lady retired ; the madness of the astronomer hung upon their minds, and they desired Imlac to enter upon his office, and delay next morning the rising of the sun.

CHAP. XLVI.

THE PRINCESS AND PEKUAH VISIT THE ASTRONOMER.

THE princess and Pekuah having talked in private of Imlac's astronomer, thought his character at once so amiable and so strange, that they could not be satisfied without a nearer knowledge ; and Imlac was requested to find the means of bringing them together.

This was somewhat difficult ; the philosopher had never received any visits from women, though he lived in a city that had in it many Europeans who followed the manners of their own countries, and many from other parts of the world, that lived there with European liberty. The ladies would not be refused, and several schemes were proposed for the accomplishment of their design. It was proposed to introduce them as strangers in distress, to whom the sage was always accessible ; but after some deliberation, it appeared, that by this artifice, no acquaintance could be formed, for their conversation would be short, and they could not decently importune him often. " This," said Rasselas, " is true ; but I have yet a stronger objection against the misrepresentation of your state. I have always considered it as treason against the great republick of human nature, to make any man's virtues the means of deceiving him, whether on great or little occasions. All imposture weakens confidence, and chills benevolence." When the sage finds that you are not what you seemed, he will feel the resentment natural to a man who, conscious of great abilities, discovers that he has been tricked by understandings meaner than his own,

and, perhaps, the distrust, which- he can never afterwards wholly lay aside, may stop the voice of counsel, and close the hand of charity ; and where will you find the power of restoring his benefactions to mankind, or his peace to himself ?”

To this no reply was attempted, and Imlac began to hope that their curiosity would subside ; but, next day, Pekuah told him, she had now found an honest pretence for a visit to the astronomer, for she would solicit permission to continue under him the studies in which she had been initiated by the Arab, and the princess might go with her either as a fellow-student, or because a woman could not decently come alone. “ I am afraid,” said Imlac, “ that he will be soon weary of your company : men advanced far in knowledge do not love to repeat the elements of their art, and I am not certain that even of the elements, as he will deliver them connected with inferences, and mingled with reflections, you are a very capable auditress.” “ That,” said Pekuah, “ must be my care : I ask of you only to take me thither. My knowledge is, perhaps, more than you imagine it, and, by concurring always with his opinions, I shall make him think it greater than it is.”

The astronomer, in pursuance of this resolution, was told that a foreign lady, travelling in search of knowledge, had heard of his reputation, and was desirous to become his scholar. The uncommonness of the proposal raised at once his surprise and curiosity ; and when, after a short deliberation, he consented to admit her, he could not stay without impatience till the next day.

The ladies dressed themselves magnificently, and were attended by Imlac to the astronomer, who was pleased to see himself approached with respect by persons of so splendid an appearance. In the exchange of the first civilities he was timorous and bashful ; but

when the talk became regular, he recollected his powers, and justified the character which Imlac had given. Inquiring of Pekuah, what could have turned her inclination towards astronomy ? he received from her a history of her adventure at the pyramid, and of the time passed in the Arab's island. She told her tale with ease and elegance, and her conversation took possession of his heart. The discourse was then turned to astronomy ; Pekuah displayed what she knew : he looked upon her as a prodigy of genius, and entreated her not to desist from a study which she had so happily begun.

They came again and again, and were every time more welcome than before. The king endeavoured to amuse them, that they might prolong their visits, for he found his thoughts grow brighter in their company ; the clouds of solicitude vanished by degrees, as he forced himself to entertain them, and he grieved when he was left at their departure to his old employment of regulating the seasons.

The princess and her favourite had now watched his lips for several months, and could not catch a single word from which they could judge whether he continued, or not, in the opinion of his preternatural commission. They often contrived to bring him to an open declaration ; but he easily eluded all their attacks, and on which side soever they pressed him, escaped from them to some other-topick.

As their familiarity increased, they invited him often to the house of Imlac, where they distinguished him by extraordinary respect. He began gradually to delight in sublunary pleasures. He came early, and departed late ; laboured to recommend himself by assiduity and compliance ; excited their curiosity after new arts, that they might still want his assistance ; and

when they made any excursion of pleasure or inquiry, entreated to attend them.

By long experience of his integrity and wisdom, the prince and his sister were convinced that he might be trusted without danger ; and lest he should draw any false hopes from the civilities which he received, discovered to him their condition, with the motives of their journey ; and required his opinion on the choice of life.

“ Of the various conditions which the world spreads before you, which you shall prefer,” said the sage, “ I am not able to instruct you. I can only tell that I have chosen wrong. I have passed my time in study without experience : in the attainment of sciences which can, for the most part, be but remotely useful to mankind. I have purchased knowledge at the expense of all the common comforts of life : I have missed the endearing elegance of female friendship, and the happy commerce of domestick tenderness. If I have obtained any prerogatives above other students, they have been accompanied with fear, disquiet, and scrupulosity : but even of these prerogatives, whatever they were, I have, since my thoughts have been diversified by more intercourse with the world, begun to question the reality. When I have been for a few days lost in pleasing dissipation, I am always tempted to think that my inquiries have ended in error, and that I have suffered much, and suffered it in vain.”

Imlac was delighted to find the sage's understanding was breaking through its mists, and resolved to detain him from the planets till he should forget his task of ruling them, and reason should recover its original influence.

From this time the astronomer was received into familiar friendship, and partook of all their projects and

pleasures : his respect kept him attentive, and the activity of Rasselas did not leave much time unengaged. Something was always to be done ; the day was spent in making observations which furnished talk for the evening, and the evening was closed with a scheme for the morrow.

The sage confessed to Imlac, that since he had mingled in the gay tumults of life, and divided his hours by a succession of amusements, he found the conviction of his authority over the skies fade gradually from his mind, and began to trust less to an opinion which he never could prove to others, and which he now found subject to variation, from causes in which reason had no part. " If I am accidentally left alone for a few hours," said he, " my inveterate persuasion rushes upon my soul, and my thoughts are chained down by some irresistible violence ; but they are soon disentangled by the prince's conversation, and instantaneously released at the entrance of Pekuah. I am like a man habitually afraid of spectres, who is set at ease by a lamp, and wonders at the dread which harrassed him in the dark ; yet, if his lamp be extinguished, feels again the terrors which he knows that when it is light he shall feel no more. But I am sometimes afraid lest I indulge my quiet by criminal negligence, and voluntarily forget the great charge with which I am intrusted. If I favour myself in a known error, or am determined by my own ease in a doubtful question of this importance, how dreadful is my crime !"

" No disease of the imagination," answered Imlac, " is so difficult of cure, as that which is complicated with the dread of guilt : fancy and conscience then act interchangeably upon us, and so often shift their places, that the illusions of one are not distinguished from the dictates of the other. If fancy presents images not

moral or religious, the mind drives them away when they give it pain, but when melancholick notions take the form of duty, they lay hold on the faculties without opposition, because we are afraid to exclude or banish them. For this reason the superstitious are often melancholy, and the melancholy almost always superstitious.

“ But do not let the suggestions of timidity overpower your better reason : the danger of neglect can be but as the probability of the obligation, which when you consider it with freedom, you find very little, and that little growing every day less. Open your heart to the influence of the light, which from time to time breaks in upon you : when scruples importune you, which you in your lucid moments know to be vain, do not stand to parley, but fly to business or to Pekuah, and keep this thought always prevalent, that you are only one atom of the mass of humanity, and have neither such virtue nor vice, as that you should be singled out for supernatural favours or afflictions.”

CHAP. XLVII.

THE PRINCE ENTERS, AND BRINGS A NEW TOPICK.

“ ALL this,” said the astronomer, “ I have often thought, but my reason has been so long subjugated by an uncontrollable and overwhelming idea, that it durst not confide in its own decisions. I now see how fatally I betrayed my quiet, by suffering chimeras to prey upon me in secret ; but melancholy shrinks from communication, and I never found a man before, to whom I could impart my troubles, though I had been certain of relief. I rejoice to find my own sentiments confirmed by yours, who are not easily deceived, and can have no motive or purpose to deceive. I hope that time and variety will dissipate the gloom that has so long surrounded me, and the latter part of my days will be spent in peace.”

“Your learning and virtue,” said Imlac, “may justly give you hopes.”

Rasselas then entered with the princess and Pekuah, and inquired, whether they had contrived any new diversion for the next day? “Such,” said Nekayah, “is the state of life, that none are happy but by the anticipation of change : the change itself is nothing : when we have made it, the next wish is to change again. The world is not yet exhausted ; let me see something to-morrow which I never saw before.”

“Variety,” said Rasselas, “is so necessary to content, that even the Happy Valley disgusted me by the recurrence of its luxuries ; yet I could not forbear to reproach myself with impatience, when I saw the monks of St. Anthony support, without complaint, a life not of uniform delight, but uniform hardship.”

“Those men,” answered Imlac, “are less wretched in their silent convent than the Abissinian princes in their prison of pleasure. Whatever is done by the monks is incited by an adequate and reasonable motive. Their labour supplies them with necessaries ; it therefore cannot be omitted, and is certainly rewarded. Their devotion prepares them for another state, and reminds them of its approach, while it fits them for it. Their time is regularly distributed ; one duty succeeds another, so that they are not left open to the distraction of unguided choice, nor lost in the shades of listless inactivity. There is a certain task to be performed at an appropriated hour ; and their toils are cheerful, because they consider them as acts of piety, by which they are always advancing towards endless felicity.”

“Do you think,” said Nekayah, “that the monastick rule is a more holy and less imperfect state than any other? May not he equally hope for future happiness who converses openly with mankind, who succours the

distressed by his charity, instructs the ignorant by his learning, and contributes by his industry to the general system of life ; even though he should omit some of the mortifications which are practised in the cloister, and allow himself such harmless delights as his condition may place within his reach ?”

“ This,” said Imlac, “ is a question which has long divided the wise, and perplexed the good. I am afraid to decide on either part. He that lives well in the world is better than he that lives well in a monastery. But, perhaps, every one is not able to stem the temptations of publick life ; and if he cannot conquer, he may properly retreat. Some have little power to do good, and have likewise little strength to resist evil. Many are weary of their conflicts with adversity, and are willing to eject those passions which have long busied them in vain. And many are dismissed by age and diseases from the more laborious duties of society. In monasteries the weak and timorous may be happily sheltered, the weary may repose, and the penitent may meditate. Those retreats of prayer and contemplation have something so congenial to the mind of man, that, perhaps, there is scarcely one that does not propose to close his life in pious abstraction with a few associates as serious as himself.”

“ Such,” said Pekuah, “ has often been my wish, and I have heard the princess declare, that she should not willingly die in a crowd.”

“ The liberty of using harmless pleasures,” proceeded Imlac, “ will not be disputed ; but it is still to be examined what pleasures are harmless. The evil of any pleasure that Nekayah can image is not in the act itself, but in its consequences. Pleasure, in itself harmless, may become mischievous, by endearing to us a state which we know to be transient and probatory,

and withdrawing our thoughts from that, of which every hour brings us nearer to the beginning, and of which no length of time will bring us to the end. Mortification is not virtuous in itself, nor has any other use, but that it disengages us from the allurements of sense. In the state of future perfection, to which we all aspire, there will be pleasure without danger, and security without restraint."

The princess was silent, and Rasselas, turning to the astronomer, asked him, whether he could not delay her retreat, by shewing her something which she had not seen before.

"Your curiosity," said the sage, "has been so general, and your pursuit of knowledge so vigorous, that novelties are not now very easily to be found: but what you can no longer procure from the living may be given by the dead. Among the wonders of this country are the catacombs, or the ancient repositories, in which the bodies of the earliest generations were lodged, and where, by the virtue of the gums which embalmed them, they yet remain without corruption."

"I know not," said Rasselas, "what pleasure the sight of the catacombs can afford; but since nothing else offered, I am resolved to view them, and shall place this with many other things which I have done, because I would do something."

They hired a guard of horsemen, and the next day visited the catacombs. When they were about to descend into the sepulchral caves, "Pekuah," said the princess, "we are now again invading the habitations of the dead; I know that you will stay behind; let me find you safe when I return." "No, I will not be left," answered Pekuah; "I will go down between you and the prince."

They then all descended, and roved with wonder

through the labyrinth of subterraneous passages, where the bodies were laid in rows on either side.

CHAP. XLVIII.

IMLAC DISCOURSES ON THE NATURE OF THE SOUL.

“WHAT reason,” said the prince, “can be given, why the Egyptians should thus expensively preserve those carcasses which some nations consume with fire, others lay to mingle with the earth, and all agree to remove from their sight, as soon as decent rights can be performed?”

“The original of ancient customs,” said Imlac, “is commonly unknown; for the practice often continues when the cause has ceased; and concerning superstitious ceremonies it is vain to conjecture; for what reason did not dictate, reason cannot explain. I have long believed that the practice of embalming arose only from tenderness to the remains of relations or friends, and to this opinion I am more inclined, because it seems impossible that this care should have been general: had all the dead been embalmed, their repositories must in time have been more spacious than the dwellings of the living. I suppose only the rich or honourable were secured from corruption, and the rest left to the course of nature.

“But it is commonly supposed that the Egyptians believed the soul to live as long as the body continued undissolved, and therefore tried this method of eluding death.”

“Could the wise Egyptians,” said Nekayah, “think so grossly of the soul? If the soul could once survive its separation, what could it afterwards receive or suffer from the body?”

“The Egyptians would doubtless think erroneously,” said the astronomer, “in the darkness of heathenism, and the first dawn of philosophy. The nature of the

soul is still disputed amidst all our opportunities of clearer knowledge : some yet say, that it may be material, who, nevertheless, believe it to be immortal."

"Some," answered Imlac, "have indeed said that the soul is material, but I can scarcely believe that any man has thought it, who knew how to think ; for all the conclusions of reason enforce the immateriality of mind, and all the notices of sense and investigations of science, concur to prove the unconsciousness of matter.

"It was never supposed that cogitation is inherent in matter, or that every particle is a thinking being. Yet, if any part of matter be devoid of thought, what part can we suppose to think ? Matter can differ from matter only in form, density, bulk, motion, and direction of motion : to which of these, however varied or combined, can consciousness be annexed ? To be round or square, to be solid or fluid, to be great or little, to be moved slowly or swiftly one way or another, are modes of material existence, all equally alien from the nature of cogitation. If matter be once without thought, it can only be made to think by some new modification, but all the modifications which it can admit are equally unconnected with cogitative powers."

"But the materialists," said the astronomer, "urge that matter may have qualities with which we are unacquainted."

"He who will determine," returned Imlac, "against that which he knows, because there may be something which he knows not ; he that can set hypothetical possibility against acknowledged certainty, is not to be admitted among reasonable beings. All that we know of matter is, that matter is inert, senseless, and lifeless ; and if this conviction cannot be opposed but by referring us to something that we know not, we have all the evidence that human intellect can admit. If that which is

known may be overruled by that which is unknown, no being not omniscient, can arrive at certainty."

"Yet let us not," said the astronomer, "too arrogantly limit the Creator's power."

"It is no limitation of omnipotence, replied the poet, to suppose that one thing is not consistent with another; that the same proposition cannot be at once true and false; that the same number cannot be even and odd, that cogitation cannot be conferred on that which is created incapable of cogitation."

"I know not," said Nekayah, "any great use of this question. Does that immateriality, which, in my opinion, you have sufficiently proved, necessarily include eternal duration?"

"Of immateriality," said Imlac, "our ideas are negative, and therefore obscure. Immateriality seems to imply a natural power of perpetual duration, as a consequence of exemption from all causes of decay: whatever perishes is destroyed by the solution of its contexture, and separation of its parts; nor can we conceive how that which has no parts, and therefore admits no solution, can be naturally corrupted or impaired."

"I know not," said Rasselas, "how to conceive any thing without extension; what is extended must have parts, and you allow, that whatever has parts may be destroyed."

"Consider your own conceptions," replied Imlac, "and the difficulty will be less. You will find substance without extension. An ideal form is no less real than material bulk: yet an ideal form has no extension. It is no less certain, when you think on a pyramid, that your mind possesses the idea of a pyramid, than that the pyramid itself is standing. What space does the idea of a pyramid occupy more than the idea of a *grain of corn*? or how can either idea suffer laceration?"

As is the effect, such is the cause : as thought, such is the power that thinks ; a power impassive and indiscerptible."

"But the Being," said Nekayah, "whom I fear to name, the Being which made the soul, can destroy it."

"He surely can destroy it," answered Imlac, "since however unperishable, it receives from a superior nature its power of duration. That it will not perish by any inherent cause of decay, or principle of corruption may be shewn by philosophy ; but philosophy can tell no more. That it will not be annihilated by him that made it, we most humbly learn from higher authority."

The whole assembly stood awhile silent and collected. "Let us return," said Rasselas, "from this scene of mortality, How gloomy would be these mansions of the dead to him who did not know that he should never die ; that what now acts shall continue its agency, and what now thinks shall think on forever. Those that lie here stretched before us, the wise and the powerful of ancient times, warn us to remember the shortness of our present state : they were, perhaps, snatched away while they were busy like us in the choice of life."

"To me," said the princess, "the choice of life is become less important ; I hope hereafter to think only on the choice of eternity."

They then hastened out of the caverns, and, under the protection of their guard, returned to Cairo.

CHAP. XLIX.

THE CONCLUSION, IN WHICH NOTHING IS CONCLUDED.

It was now the time of the inundation of the Nile : a few days after their visit to the catacombs, the river began to rise.

They were confined to their house. The whole region being under water, gave them no invitation to any

excursions, and, being well supplied with materials for talk, they diverted themselves with comparisons of the different forms of life which they had observed, and with various schemes of happiness, which each of them had formed.

Pekuah was never so much charmed with any place as the convent of St. Anthony, where the Arab restored her to the princess, and wished only to fill it with pious maidens, and to be made prioress of the order; she was weary of expectation and disgust, and would gladly be fixed in some unvariable state.

The princess thought, that of all sublunary things knowledge was the best: she desired first to learn all sciences, and then purposed to found a college of learned women, in which she would preside, that, by conversing with the old, and educating the young, she might divide her time between the acquisition and communication of wisdom, and raise up for the next age models of prudence, and patterns of piety.

The prince desired a little kingdom, in which he might administer justice in his own person, and see all the parts of government with his own eyes; but he could never fix the limits of his dominions, and was always adding to the number of his subjects.

Imlac and the astronomer were contented to be driven along the stream of life, without directing their course to any particular port.

Of these wishes that they had formed, they well knew that none could be obtained. They deliberated awhile what was to be done, and resolved, when the inundation should cease, to return to Abissinia.

THE
POEMS
OF
SAMUEL JOHNSON, L.L. D.



LONDON:

IN IMITATION OF THE THIRD SATIRE OF JUVENAL.

.....Quis ineptæ

Tam patiens urbis, tam ferreus ut teneat se? JUV.

THOUGH grief and fondness in my breast rebel,
When injured Thales bids the town farewell,
Yet still my calmer thoughts his choice commend,
I praise the hermit, but regret the friend,
Who, now from vice and London fondly roves
To breath a purer air in Cambria's groves,
And fix'd on her wild solitary shore,
Give to St. David one true Britain more.

For who would leave, unbribed, Hibernia's land,
Or change the rocks of Scotland for the Strand?
There none are swept by sudden fate away,
But all whom hunger spares, with age decay;
Here malice, rapine, accident, conspire,
And now a rabble rages, now a fire;
Their ambush, here relentless ruffins lay,
And here the fell attorney prowls for prey;
Here falling houses thunder on your head,
And here a female atheist talks you dead.

LONDON.

While Thales waits the wherry that contains
dissipated wealth, the small remains,
Thames's banks, in silent thought we stood,
There Greenwich smiles upon the silver flood ;
Truck with the seat that gave Eliza birth,
We kneel, and kiss the consecrated earth ;
In pleasing dreams the blissful age renew,
And call Britannia's glories back to view ;
Behold her cross triumphant on the main,
The guard of commerce, and the dread of Spain,
Ere masquerades debauched, excise oppressed,
Or English honour grew a standing jest.

A transient calm the happy scenes bestow,
And for a moment lull the sense of woe.
At length awaking, with contemptuous frown,
Indignant Thales, eyes the neighbouring town.
'Since worth,' he cries, 'in these degenerate days,
Wants ev'n the cheap reward of empty praise ;
In those curs'd walls, devote to vice and gain,
Since unrewarded science toils in vain ;
Since hope but soothes, to double my distress,
And every moment leaves my little less ;
While yet my steady steps no staff sustains,
And life still vigorous revels in my veins ;
Grant me, kind Heav'n, to find some happier place,
Where honesty and sense are no disgrace ;
Some pleasing bank where verdant osiers play,
Some peaceful vale with Nature's painting gay ;
Where once the harassed Britain found repose,
And safe in poverty defied his foes ;
Some secret cell, ye powers, indulgent give,
Let —— live here, for —— has learned to live.

Here let those reign, whom pensions can incite
To vote a patriot black, a courtier white ;
Explain their country's dear-bought rights away,
And plead for pirates in the face of day ;
With slavish tenets taint our poisoned youth,
And lend a lie the confidence of truth.

‘ Let such buy manors, and, like noble Lords
Collect a tax, and husband public frauds ;
With warbling eunuchs fill a licensed stage,
And lull to servitude a thoughtless age.

Heroes, proceed ! what bounds your pride shall hold ?
What check restrain your thirst of power and gold ?
Behold opposing virtue quite o’erthrown ;
Behold our fame, our wealth, our lives your own :
To such, a groaning nation’s spoils are given,
When public crimes inflame the wrath of Heaven.
But what, my friend, what hope remains for me,
Who start at theft, and blush at perjury ?
Who scarce forbear, though Britain’s court he sing,
To pluck a titled poet’s borrowed wing ;
A statesman’s logic unconvinced can hear,
And slumber o’er a pension’d Gazetteer.
Despise a fool in half his pension dress’d,
And strive in vain to laugh at H—y’s jest.

‘ Others, with softer smiles, and subtler art,
Can sap the principles, or taint the heart ;
With more address a lover’s note convey,
Or bribe a virgin’s innocence away.
Well may they rise, while I, whose rustic tongue
N—er knew to puzzle right, or varnish wrong,
Spurn’d as a beggar, dreaded as a spy,
Live unregarded, unlamented die.

‘For what but social guilt the friend endears?
Who shares Orgilio’s crimes, his wreath and fears.
But thou, should tempting villany present
All Marlborough hoarded, or all Villiers spent,
Turn from the glittering bribe thy scornful eye,
Nor sell for gold, what gold could never buy,
The peaceful slumber, self-approving day,
Unsullied fame, and conscience ever gay.

‘The cheated nation’s happy favourites, see!
Mark whom the great caress, who frown on me!
London! the needy villain’s general home,
The common sewer of Paris, and of Rome;
With eager thirst, by folly or by fate,
Sucks in the dregs of each corrupted state.
Forgive my transports on a theme like this,
I cannot bear a French metropolis.

‘Illustrious Edward! from the realms of day,
The land of heroes and of saints survey;
Nor hope the British lineaments to trace,
The rustic grandeur, or the surly grace,
But lost in thoughtless ease, and empty show,
Behold the warrior dwindled to a beau;
Sense, freedom, piety, refin’d away,
Of France the mimic, and of Spain the prey.

‘All that at home no more can beg or steal,
Or like a gibbet better than a wheel;
Hiss’d from the stage, or hooted from the court,
Their air, their dress, their politics import;
Obsequious, artful, voluble, and gay,
On Britain’s fond credulity they prey.
No gainful trade their industry will lose,
They sing, they dance, or clean your boots or shoes.

All sciences a fasting Monsieur knows,
And bid him go to hell, to hell he goes.

‘Ah! what avails it, that, from slav’ry far,
I drew the breath of life in English air;
Was early taught a Britain’s right to prize,
And lisp the tale of Henry’s victories;
If the gull’d conqueror receives the chain,
And flattery subdues when arms are vain?

‘Studious to please, and ready to submit,
The supple Gaul was born a parasite;
Still to his interest true, where’er he goes,
Wit, bravery, worth, his lavish tongue bestows;
In every face a thousand graces shine,
From every tongue flows harmony divine.
These arts in vain our rugged natives try,
Strain out with faltering diffidence a lie.

‘Besides, with justice this discerning age
Admires their wondrous talents for the stage.
Well may they venture on the mimic’s art,
Who play from morn to night a borrow’d part;
Practis’d their master’s notion’s to embrace,
Repeat his maxims, and reflect his face;
With every wild absurdity comply,
And view each object with another’s eye;
To shake with laughter ere the jest they hear,
And pour at will the counterfeited tear;
And as their patron to each pole may turn,
To shake in dog-days, in December burn.
How, when competitors like these contend,
Can surly virtue hope to fix a friend?
Slaves that with serious impudence beguile,
And lie without a blush, without a smile;

Exalt each trifle, every view extol,
Your taste in snuff, your judgment in a doll.

‘For arts like these preferr’d, admir’d, caress’d,
They first invade your table, then your breast ;
Explore your secrets with insidious art,
Watch the weak hour, and ransack all the heart ;
Then soon your ill-placed confidence repay,
Commence your lords, and govern or betray.

‘By numbers here from shame or censure free,
All crimes are safe, but hated poverty.
This, only this, the rigid law pursues,
This, only this, provokes the snarling muse.
The sober trader at a tatter’d cloak,
Wakes from his dream, and labours for a joke ;
With brisker air the silken courtier’s gaze,
And turn the varied taunt a thousand ways.
Of all the griefs that harass the distress’d,
Sure the most bitter is a scornful jest ;
Fate never wounds more deep the generous heart,
Than when a blockhead’s insult points the dart.

‘Has Heaven reserv’d, in pity to the poor,
No pathless waste, or undiscover’d shore ?
No secret island in the boundless main ?
No peaceful desert yet unclaim’d by Spain ?
Quick let us rise, the happy seats explore,
And bear oppression’s insolence no more.
This mournful truth is every where confess’d,
Slow rises worth, by poverty depress’d.
But here more slow, where all are slaves to gold,
Where looks are traffic, and whose smiles are sold ;
Where won by bribes, by flatteries implor’d,
The groom retails the favours of his lord.

‘But hark ! the affrighted crowd’s tumultuous cries
Roll through the streets, and thunder to the skies.
Rais’d from some pleasing dream of wealth and pow’r,
Some pompous palace, or some blissful bower,
Aghast you start, and scarce with aching sight
Sustain the approaching fire’s tremendous light ;
Swift from pursuing horrors take your way,
And leave your little all to flames a prey ;
Then through the world a wretched vagrant roam,
For where can starving merit find a home ?
In vain your mournful narrative disclose,
While all neglect, and most insult your woes.

‘Should Heaven’s just bolts Orgilio’s wealth confound,

And spread his flaming palace on the ground,
Swift o’er the land the dismal rumour flies,
And public mournings pacify the skies ;
The laureate tribe in servile verse relate,
How virtue wars with persecuting fate ;
With well-feigned gratitude the pension’d band
Refund the plunder of the beggar’d land.
See ! while he builds, the gaudy vassals come,
And crowd with sudden wealth the rising dome ;
The price of boroughs and of souls restore,
And raise his treasures higher than before ;
Now bless’d with all the baubles of the great,
The polish’d marble, and the shining plate,
Orgilio sees the golden pile aspire,
And hopes from angry Heav’n another fire.

‘Couldst thou resign the park and play content
For the fair banks of Severn or of Trent ;

There might'st thou find some elegant retreat,
Some hireling senator's deserted seat ;
And stretch thy prospects o'er the smiling land,
For less than rent the dungeons of the Strand ;
There prune thy walks, support thy drooping flow'rs,
Direct thy rivulets, and twine thy bow'rs ;
And, while thy beds a cheap repast afford,
Despise the dainties of venal lord.

There every bush with nature's music rings,
There every breeze bears health upon its wings ;
On all thy hours security shall smile,
And bless thine evening walk and morning toil.

' Prepare for death, if here at night you roam,
And sign your will before you sup from home.

' Some fiery fop, with new commission vain,
And sleeps on brambles till each kills his man ;
Some frolic drunkard reeling from a feast,
Provokes a broil, and stabs you for a jest.

' Yet ev'n these heroes, mischievously gay,
Lords of the street, and terrors of the way ;
Flush'd as they are with folly, youth, and wine,
Their prudent insults to the poor confine ;
Afar they mark the flambeau's bright approach,
And shun the shining train, and golden coach.

' In vain these dangers past, your doors you close,
And hope the balmy blessings of repose.
Cruel with guilt, and daring with despair,
The midnight murderer bursts the faithless bar ;
Invades the sacred hour of silent rest,
And plants, unseen, a dagger in your breast.

' Scarce can our fields, such crowds at Tyburn die,
With hemp the gallows and the fleet supply.

Propose your schemes, ye senatorian band,
Whose ways and means support the sinking land ;
Lest ropes be wanting in the tempting spring,
To rig another convoy for the k—g.*

‘A single jail, in Alfred’s golden reign,
Could half the nation’s criminals contain ;
Fair Justice then, without constraint ador’d,
Held high the steady scale, but sheath’d the sword ;
No spies were paid, no special juries known ;
Blest age ! but ah ! how different from our own !

‘Much could I add ; but see the boat at hand,
The tide retiring, calls me from the land ;
Farewell ! When youth, and health, and fortune spent,
Thou fly’st for refuge to the wilds of Kent ;
And tir’d like me with follies and with crimes,
In angry numbers warn’st succeeding times ;
Then shall thy friend, nor thou refuse his aid,
Still foe to vice, forsake his Cambrian shade ;
In virtue’s cause once more exert his rage,
Thy satire point, and animate thy page.’

* The nation was discontented at the visits made by George the Second to Hanover.

THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES.

IN IMITATION OF THE TENTH SATIRE OF JUVENAL.

LET Observation, with extensive view,
Survey mankind, from China to Peru ;
Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,
And watch the busy scenes of crowded life ;
Then say how hope and fear, desire and hate,
O'erspread with snares the clouded maze of fate,
Where wavering man, betray'd by venturous pride,
To tread the dreary paths without a guide ;
As treacherous phantoms in the mist delude,
Shuns fancied ills, or chases airy good.
How rarely reason guides the stubborn choice,
Rules the bold hand, or prompts the suppliant voice ;
How nations sink, by darling schemes oppress'd,
When vengeance listens to the fool's request.
Fate wings with every wish the afflictive dart,
Each gift of nature, and each grace of art ;
With fatal heat impetuous courage glows,
With fatal sweetness elocution flows ;
Impeachment stops the speaker's powerful breath,
And restless fire precipitates on death.

But scarce observ'd, the knowing and the bold
Fall in the general massacre of gold ;
Wide-wasting pest ! that rages unconfin'd,
And crowds with crimes the records of mankind ;

For gold his sword the hireling ruffian draws,
For gold the hireling judge distorts the laws ;
Wealth heap'd on wealth, nor truth nor safety buys ;
The dangers gather as the treasures rise.

Let history tell where rival kings command,
And dubious title shakes the madd'd land,
When statutes glean the refuse of the sword,
How much more safe the vassal than the lord ;
Low sculks the hind beneath the rage of pow'r,
And leaves the wealthy traitor in the tow'r,
Untouch'd his cottage, and his slumbers sound,
Though confiscation's vultures hover round.

The needy traveller, serene and gay,
Walks the wild heath, and sings his toil away.
Does envy seize thee ? crush th' upbraiding joy,
Increase his riches, and his peace destroy ;
New fears in dire vicissitude invade,
The rustling brake alarms, and quivering shade ;
Nor light nor darkness bring his pain relief,
One shows the plunder, and one hides the thief.

Yet still one general cry the skies assails,
And gain and grandeur load the tainted gales ;
Few know the toiling statesman's fear or care,
Th' insidious rival and the gaping heir.

Once more, Democritus, arise on earth,
With cheerful wisdom and instructive mirth,
See motley life in modern trappings drest,
And feed with varied fools th' eternal jest ;
Thou who couldst laugh where want enchain'd caprice,
Toil crush'd conceit, and man was of a piece ;
Where wealth unlov'd without a mourner died ;
And scarce a sycophant was fed by pride !

Where ne'er was known the form of mock debate,
Or seen a new-made mayor's unwieldy state ;
Where change of favourites made no change of laws,
And senates heard before they judg'd a cause ;
How wouldst thou shake at Britain's modish tribe,
Dart the quick taunt, and edge the piercing gibe ?
Attentive truth and nature to decry,
And pierce each scene with philosophic eye.
To thee were solemn toys or empty show,
The robes of pleasure and the vails of woe ;
All aid the farce, and all thy mirth maintain,
Whose joys are causeless, or whose griefs are vain.

Such was the scorn that fill'd the sage's mind,
Renew'd at every glance on human kind ;
How just that scorn ere yet thy voice declare,
Search every state, and canvass every pray'r.

Unnumber'd suppliants crowd Preferment's gate,
A thirst for wealth, and burning to be great ;
Delusive Fortune hears th' incessant call,
They mount, they shine, evaporate and fall.
On every stage the foes of peace attend,
Hate dogs their flight, and insult mocks their end.
Love ends with hope, the sinking statesman's door
Pours in the morning-worshipper no more ;
For growing names the weekly scribbler lies,
To growing wealth the dedicator flies ;
From every room descends the painted face,
That hung the bright Palladium of the place,
And smok'd in kitchens, or in auctions sold,
To better features yield the frame of gold ;
For now no more we trace in every line
Heroic worth, benevolence divine ;

The form distorted justifies the fall,
And detestation rids th' indignant wall.

But will not Britain hear the last appeal,
Sign her foe's doom, or guard her favourite's zeal ?
Thro' Freedom's sons no more remonstrance rings,
Degrading nobles and controlling kings ;
Our supple tribes repress their patriot throats,
And ask no questions but the price of votes ;
With weekly libels and septennial ale,
Their wish is full to riot and to rail.

In full-blown dignity, see Wolsey stand,
Law in his voice, and fortune in his hand :
To him the church, the realm, their powers consign,
Through him the rays of regal bounty shine,
Still to new heights his restless wishes tow'r,
Claim leads to claim, and pow'r advances pow'r ;
Till conquest unresisted ceas'd to please,
And rights submitted, left him none to seize.
At length his Sovereign frowns—the train of state
Mark the keen glance, and watch the sign to hate.
Where'er he turns he meets a stranger's eye,
His suppliants scorn him, and his followers fly ;
At once is lost the pride of awful state,
The golden canopy, the glittering plate,
The regal palace, the luxurious board,
The liveried army, and the menial lord.
With age, with cares, with maladies oppress'd,
He seeks the refuge of monastic rest.
Grief aids disease, remember'd folly stings,
And his last sighs reproach the faith of kings.

Speak thou, whose thoughts at humble peace repine
Shall Wolsey's wealth, with Wolsey's end be thine ?

Or liv'st thou now, with safer pride content,
The wisest justice on the banks of Trent ?
For why did Wolsey, near the steep's of fate,
On weak foundations raise th' enormous weight ?
Why but to sink beneath misfortune's blow,
With louder ruin to the gulfs below ?

What gave great Villers to th' assassin's knife,
And fix'd disease on Harley's closing life ?
What murder'd Wentworth, and what exil'd Hyde,
By kings protected, and to kings allied ?
What but their wish indulg'd in courts to shine,
And pow'r too great to keep, or to resign ?

When first the college-rolls receive his name,
The young enthusiast quits his ease for fame ;
Through all his veins the fever of renown
Spreads from the strong contagion of the gown ;
O'er Bodley's dome his future labours spread,
And *Bacon's mansion trembles o'er his head.
Are these thy views ? proceed, illustrious youth,
And Virtue guard thee to the throne of Truth !
Yet should thy soul indulge the generous heat,
Till captive Science yields her last retreat ;
Should Reason guide thee with her brightest ray,
And pour on misty Doubt resistless day ;
Should no false Kindness lure to loose delight,
Nor Praise relax, nor Difficulty fright ;
Should tempting Novelty thy cell refrain,
And Sloth effuse her opiate fumes in vain ;

* There is a tradition, that the study of Friar Bacon, built on an arch over the bridge, will fall, when a man greater than Bacon shall pass under it.

Should Beauty blunt on fops her fatal dart,
Nor claim the triumph of a letter'd heart ;
Should no Disease thy torpid veins invade,
Nor Melancholy's phantoms haunt thy shade ;
Yet hope not life from grief or danger free,
Nor think the doom of man revers'd for thee :
Deign on the passing world' to turn thine eyes,
And pause awhile from letters, to be wise ;
There mark what ills the scholar's life assail,
Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the jail.
See nations slowly wise, and meanly just,
To buried merit raise the tardy bust.
If dreams yet flatter, once again attend,
Hear Lydiat's life, and Galileo's end.

Nor deem, when Learning her last prize bestows,
The glittering eminence exempt from woes ;
See when the vulgar 'scape, despis'd or aw'd,
Rebellion's vengeful talons seize on Laud.
From meaner minds, though smaller fines content
The plunder'd palace or sequester'd rent ;
Mark't out by dangerous parts he meets the shock,
And fatal Learning leads him to the block :
Around his tomb let Art and Genius weep,
But hear his death, ye blockheads ! hear and sleep.

The festal blazes, the triumphal show,
The ravish'd standard, and the captive foe,
The senate's thanks, the gazette's pompous tale,
With force resistless o'er the brave prevail.
Such bribes the rapid Greek o'er Asia whirl'd,
For such the steady Romans shook the world :
For such in distant lands the Britons shine,
And stain with blood the Danube to the Rhine ;

This pow'r has praise that virtue scarce can warm,
Till fame supplies the universal charm.
Yet Reason frowns on War's unequal game,
Where wasted nations raise a single name,
And mortgag'd states their grandsires wreaths regret,
From age to age in everlasting debt ;
Wreaths which at last the dear-bought right convey
To rust on medals, or on stones decay.

On what foundation stands the warrior's pride,
How just his hopes let Swedish Charles decide ;
A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him, and no labours tire ;
O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,
Unconquer'd lord of pleasure and of pain ;
No joys to him pacific sceptres yield,
War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field ;
Behold surrounding kings their pow'rs combine,
And one capitulate, and one resign ;
Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain ;
' Think nothing gain'd,' he cries, ' till nought remain ;
On Mosco's walls till Gothic standards fly,
And all be mine beneath the polar sky.'
The march begins in military state,
And nations on his eye suspended wait ;
Stern Famine guards the solitary coast,
And Winter barricades the realms of Frost ;
He comes, not want and cold his course delay ;—
Hide, blushing Glory, hide Pultowa's day :
The vanquish'd hero leaves his broken bands,
And shows his miseries in distant lands ;
Condemn'd a needy suppliant to wait ;
While ladies interpose, and slaves debate.

But did not Chance at length her error mend ?
Did no subverted empire mark his end ?
Did rival monarchs give the fatal wound ?
Or hostile millions press him to the ground ?
His fall was destin'd to a barren strand,
A petty fortress, and a dubious hand ;
He left the name, at which the world grew pale,
To point a moral, or adorn a tale.

All times their scenes of pompous woes afford,
From Persia's tyrant, to Bavaria's lord.
In gay hostility, and barbarous pride,
With half mankind embattled at his side,
Great Xerxes comes to seize the certain prey,
And starves exhausted regions in his way ;
Attendant Flattery counts his myriads o'er,
Till counted myriads soothe his pride no more ;
Fresh praise is tried till madness fires his mind,
The waves he lashes, and enchains the wind ;
New pow'rs are claimed, new pow'rs are still bestow'd,
Till rude resistance lops the spreading god ;
The daring Greeks deride the martial show,
And heap their vallies with the gaudy foe ;
Th' insulted sea with humbler thoughts he gains,
A single skiff to speed his flight remains ;
Th' incumber'd oar scarce leaves the dreaded coast
Through purple billows and a floating host.

The bold Bavarian, in a luckless hour,
Tries the dread summits of Cæsarean pow'r,
With unexpected legions bursts away,
And sees defenceless realms receive his sway ;
Short sway ! fair Austria spreads her mournful charms,
The queen, the beauty, sets the world in arms ;

From hill to hill the beacons' rousing blaze
Spreads wide the hope of plunder and of praise ;
The fierce Croation, and the wild Hussar,
And all the sons of ravage, crowd the war ;
The baffled prince in honour's flattering bloom
Of hasty greatness finds the fatal doom,
His foes' derision, and his subjects' blame,
And steals to death from anguish and from shame.

'Enlarge my life with multitude of days,'
In health, in sickness, thus the suppliant prays ;
Hides from himself his state, and shuns to know,
That life protracted, is protracted woe.
Time hovers o'er, impatient to destroy,
And shuts up all the passages of joy :
In vain their gifts the bounteous Seasons pour,
The fruit autumnal, and the vernal flow'r,
With listless eyes the dotard views the store,
He views, and wonders that they please no more ;
Now pall the tasteless meats, and joyless wines,
And Luxury with sighs her slave resigns.
Approach, ye minstrels, try the soothing strain,
And yield the tuneful lenitives of pain :
No sounds, alas ! would touch the' impervious ear,
Though dancing mountains witness'd Orpheus near ;
Nor lute nor lyre his feeble pow'r attend,
Nor sweeter music of a virtuous friend,
But everlasting dictates crowd his tongue,
Perversely grave, or positively wrong.
The still-returning tale, and lingering jest,
Perplex the fawning niece and pamper'd guest,
While growing hopes scarce awe the gathering age
And scarce a legacy can bribe to hear ;

The watchful guests still hint the last offence,
The daughter's petulance, the son's expense,
Improve his heady rage with treacherous skill,
And mould his passions till they make his will.

Unnumber'd maladies his joints invade,
Lay siege to life, and press the dire blockade ;
But unextinguish'd Avarice still remains,
And dreaded losses aggravate his pains ;
He turns, with anxious heart and crippled hands,
His bonds of debt, and mortgages of lands ;
Or views his coffers with suspicious eyes,
Unlocks his gold, and counts it till he dies.

But grant, the virtues of a temperate prime
Bless with an age exempt from scorn or crime ;
An age that melts in unperceiv'd decay,
And glides in modest innocence away ;
Whose peaceful day Benevolence endears,
Whose night congratulating Conscience cheers ;
The general favourite, as the general friend :
Such age there is, and who could wish its end.

Yet e'en on this her load Misfortune flings,
To press the weary minute's flagging wings ;
New sorrow rises as the day returns,
A sister sickens, or a daughter mourns.
Now kindred Merit fills the sable bier,
Now lacerated Friendship claims a tear.
Year chases year, decay pursues decay,
Still drops some joy from withering life away ;
New forms arise, and different views engage,
Superfluous lags the veteran on the stage,
Till pitying Nature signs the last release,
And bids afflicted worth retire to peace.

But few there are whom hours like these await,
Who set unclouded in the gulfs of Fate.
From Lydia's monarch should the search descend,
By Solon caution'd to regard his end ;
In life's last scene what prodigies surprise,
Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise ?
From Marlborough's eyes the streams of dotage flow,
And Swift expires a driveller and a show.

The teeming mother, anxious for her race,
Begs for each birth the fortune of a face :
Yet Vane could tell what ills from beauty spring ;
And Sedley curs'd the form that pleas'd a king.
Ye nymphs of rosy lips and radiant eyes !
Whom pleasure keeps too busy to be wise,
Whom joys with soft varieties invite,
By day the frolic, and the dance by night,
Who frown with vanity, who smile with art,
And ask the latest fashion of the heart,
What care, what rules your heedless charms shall save,
Each nymph your rival, and each youth your slave ?
Against your fame with fondness hate combines,
The rival batters, and the lover mines,
With distant voice neglected Virtue calls,
Less heard and less, the faint remonstrance falls ;
Tir'd with contempt, she quits the slippery reign,
And Pride and Prudence take her seat in vain.
In crowd at once, where none the pass defend,
The harmless Freedom, and the private Friend.
The guardians yield, by force superior ply'd :
By Interest, Prudence ; and by Flattery, Pride.
Now Beauty falls betray'd, despis'd, distress'd,
And hissing Infamy proclaims the rest.

When then shall Hope and Fear their objects find ?
Must dull Suspense corrupt the stagnant mind ?
Must helpless man, in ignorance sedate,
Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate ?
Must no dislike alarm, no wishes rise,
No cries attempt the mercies of the skies ?
Inquirer, cease ! petitions yet remain,
Which Heav'n may hear, nor deem religion vain.
Still raise for good the supplicating voice,
But leave to Heav'n the measure and the choice.
Safe in His pow'r, whose eyes discern afar
The secret ambush of a specious pray'r.
Implore his aid, in his decisions rest,
Secure whate'er he gives, he gives the best.
Yet when the sense of sacred presence fires,
And strong devotion to the skies aspires,
Pour forth thy fervors for a healthful mind,
Obedient passions, and a will resign'd ;
For love, which scarce collective man can fill ;
For patience, sovereign o'er transmuted ill ;
For faith, that panting for a happier seat,
Counts death kind Nature's signal of retreat :
These goods for man the laws of Heav'n ordain,
The goods *He* grants, who grants the pow'r to gain ;
With these celestial Wisdom calms the mind,
And makes the happiness she does not find.

O D E S.

FRIENDSHIP.

FRIENDSHIP, peculiar boon of heaven,
The noble mind's delight and pride,
To men and angels only given,
To all the lower world denied.

While love, unknown among the blest,
Parent of thousand wild desires,
The savage and the human breast
Torments alike with raging fires.

With bright, but oft destructive gleam,
Alike o'er all his lightnings fly,
Thy lambent glories only beam
Around the favourites of the sky.

Thy gentle flows of guiltless joys
On fools and villains ne'er descend;
In vain for thee the tyrant sighs,
And hugs a flatterer for a friend.

Directress of the brave and just,
O guide us through life's darksome way!
And let the tortures of mistrust
On selfish bosoms only prey.

Nor shall thine ardours cease to glow,
When souls to peaceful climes remove;
What rais'd our virtue here below
Shall aid our happiness above.

THE VANITY OF WEALTH.

No more thus brooding o'er yon heap,
With Avarice painful vigils keep:
Still unenjoy'd the present store,
Still endless sighs are breathed for more.
O! quit the shadow, catch the prize,
Which not all India's treasure buys!
To purchase Heaven has gold the power?
Can gold remove the mortal hour?
In life can love be bought with gold?
Are friendship's pleasures to be sold?
No—all that's worth a wish—a thought,
Fair virtue gives unbrib'd, unbought.
Cease then on trash thy hopes to bind,
Let nobler views engage thy mind.
With science tread the wondrous way,
Or learn the Muses' moral lay;
In social hours indulge thy soul,
Where mirth and temperance mix the bowl:
To virtuous love resign thy breast,
And be by blessing beauty—blest.
Thus taste the feast by Nature spread,
Ere youth and all its joys are fled;

Come taste with me the balm of life,
Secure from pomp, and wealth, and strife.
I boast whate'er for man was meant,
In health, and Stella, and content ;
And scorn ! Oh ! let that scorn be thine ;
Mere things of clay, that dig the mine.

SPRING.

STERN Winter now, by Spring repress'd,
Forbears the long-continued strife ;
And Nature, on her naked breast,
Delights to catch the gales of life.
Now o'er the rural kingdom roves
Soft Pleasure with her laughing train,
Love warbles in the vocal groves,
And vegetation plants the plain.
Unhappy ! whom to beds of pain,
Arthritic* tyranny consigns ;
Whom smiling Nature courts in vain,
Though rapture sings and beauty shines.
Yet though my limbs disease invades,
Her wings Imagination tries,
And bears me to the peaceful shades,
Where ——'s humble turrets rise.

* The author being ill of the gout.

Here stop, my soul, thy rapid flight,
Nor from the pleasing groves depart,
Where first great Nature charm'd my sight,
Where Wisdom first inform'd my heart.

Here let me through the vales pursue,
A guide—a father—and a friend,
Once more great Nature's works renew,
Once more on Wisdom's voice attend.

From false caresses, causeless strife,
Wild hope, vain fear, alike remov'd;
Here let me learn the use of life,
When best enjoy'd—when most improv'd.

Teach me, thou venerable bower,
Cool meditation's quiet seat,
The generous scorn of venal power,
The silent grandeur of retreat.

When pride by guilt to greatness climbs,
Or raging factions rush to war,
Here let me learn to shun the crimes
I can't prevent, and will not share.

But lest I fall by subtler foes,
Bright Wisdom teach me Curio's art,
The swelling passions to compose,
And quell the rebels of the heart.

SUMMER.

O PHŒBUS ! down the western sky,
Far hence diffuse thy burning ray,
Thy light to distant worlds supply,
And wake them to the cares of day.

Come gentle Eve, the friend of care,
Come, Cynthia, lovely queen of night !
Refresh me with a cooling breeze,
And cheer me with a lambent light.

Lay me, where o'er the verdant ground
Her living carpet Nature spreads ;
Where the green bower with roses crown'd,
In showers its fragrant foliage sheds.

Improve the peaceful hour with wine,
Let music die along the grove ;
Around the bowl let myrtles twine,
And every strain be tun'd to love.

Come, Stella, queen of all my heart !
Come, born to fill its vast desires !
Thy looks perpetual joy impart,
Thy voice perpetual love inspires.

Whilst all my wish and thine complete,
By turns we languish and we burn,
Let sighing gales our sighs repeat,
Our murmurs—murmuring brooks return.

Let me when Nature calls to rest,
And blushing skies the morn foretell,
Sink on the down of Stella's breast,
And bid the waking world farewell.

AUTUMN.

ALAS ! with swift and silent pace,
Impatient Time rolls on the year ;
The Seasons change, and Nature's face
Now sweetly smiles, now frowns severe.
'Twas Spring, 'twas Summer, all was gay,
Now Autumn bends a cloudy brow ;
The flowers of Spring are swept away,
And Summer fruits desert the bough.
The verdant leaves that play'd on high,
And wanton'd on the western breeze,
Now trod in dust neglected lie,
As Boreas strips the bending trees.
The fields that wav'd with golden grain,
As russet heaths are wild and bare ;
Not moist with dew, but drench'd in rain,
Nor health, nor pleasure wanders there.
No more, while through the midnight shade
Beneath the moon's pale orb I stray,
Soft pleasing woes my heart invade,
As Progne pours the melting lay.

From this capricious clime she soars,
O ! would some god but wings supply !
To where each morn the Spring restores,
Companion of her flight I'd fly.

Vain wish ! me fate compels to bear
The downward seasons' iron reign,
Compels to breathe polluted air,
And shiver on a blasted plain.

What bliss to life can Autumn yield,
If glooms, and showers, and storms prevail ;
And Ceres flies the naked field,
And flowers, and fruits, and Phœbus fail !

Oh ! what remains, what lingers yet,
To cheer me in the darkening hour ?
The grape remains ! the friend of wit,
In love, and mirth, of mighty power.

Haste—press the clusters, fill the bowl ;
Apollo ! shoot thy parting ray :
This gives the sunshine of the soul,
This god of health, and verse, and day.

Still—still the jocund strain shall flow,
The pulse with vigorous rapture beat ;
My Stella with new charms shall glow,
And every bliss in wine shall meet.

WINTER.

No more the morn with tepid rays
Unfolds the flower of various hue ;
Noon spreads no more the genial blaze,
Nor gentle eve distils the dew.

The ling'ring hours prolong the night,
Usurping darkness shares the day :
Her mists restrain the force of light,
And Phœbus holds a doubtful sway.

By gloomy twilight half reveal'd,
With sighs we view the hoary hill,
The leafless wood, the naked field,
The snow top cot, the frozen rill.

No music warbles through the grove,
No vivid colours paint the plain ;
No more with devious steps I rove
Through verdant paths, now sought in vain.

Aloud the driving tempest roars,
Congeal'd, impetuous showers descend ;
Haste, close the window, bar the doors,
Fate leaves me Stella, and a friend.

In Nature's aid, let art supply,
With light and heat my little sphere ;
Rouze, rouze the fire, and pile it high,
Light up a constellation here.

Let music sound the voice of joy,
Or mirth repeat the jocund tale ;
Let Love his wanton wiles employ,
And o'er the season wine prevail.
Yet time life's dreary winter brings,
When mirth's gay tale shall please no more ;
Nor music charm—though Stella sings ;
Nor love, nor wine, the spring restore.
Catch, then, Oh ! catch the transient hour,
Improve each moment as it flies ;
Life's a short summer—man a flower :
He dies—alas ! how soon he dies !

THE WINTER'S WALK.

BEHOLD, my fair, where'er we rove,
What dreary prospects round us rise ;
The naked hill, the leafless grove,
The hoary ground, the frowning skies !
Nor only through the wasted plain,
Stern Winter ! is thy force confess'd ;
Still wider spreads thy horrid reign,
I feel thy power usurp my breast.
Enlivening hope, and fond desire,
Resign the heart to spleen and care ;
Scarce frightened love maintains her fire,
And rapture saddens to despair.

In groundless hope, and causeless fear,
Unhappy man! behold thy doom ;
Still changing with the changeful year,
The slave of sunshine and of gloom.
Tir'd with vain joys, and false alarms,
With mental and corporeal strife,
Snatch me, my Stella, to thy arms,
And screen me from the ills of life.

EVENING ODE.

TO STELLA.

EVENING now from purple wings
Sheds the grateful gifts she brings ;
Brilliant drops bedeck the mead,
Cooling breezes shake the reed ;
Shake the reed, and curl the stream
Silver'd o'er with Cynthia's beam ;
Near the chequer'd, lonely grove,
Hears, and keeps thy secrets, love !
Stella, thither let us stray,
Lightly o'er the dewy way.
Phœbus drives his burning car,
Hence, my lovely Stella, far ;
In his stead, the queen of night
Round us pours a lambent light :
Light that seems but just to show
Breasts that beat, and cheeks that glow ;

Let us now, in whisper'd joy,
 Evening's silent hours employ,
 Silence best, and conscious shades,
 Please the hearts that love invade,
 Other pleasures give them pain,
 Lovers all but love disdain.

MESSIA.

TOLLITE concentum, Solymææ tollite nymphæ !
 Nil mortale loquor, cœlum mihi carminis alta
 Materies ; poscunt gravius cœlestia plectrum.
 Muscosi fontes, silvestria tecta, valet,
 Aonidesque Deæ, et mendacis somnia Pindi.
 Tu mihi, qui flammâ movisti pectora sancti
 Sidereâ Isaïæ, dignos accende furores !

Immatura calens rapitur per sæcula vates,
 Sic orsus—Qualis rerum mihi nascitur ordo !
 Virgo ! virgo parit ! felix radicibus arbor
 Jessæis surgit, mulcentisque æthera flores
 Cælestes lambunt animæ ; ramisque columba
 Nuncia sacra Dei, plaudentibus insidet alis.
 Nectareos rores, alimenta que mitia cœlum
 Præbeat, et tacitè fœcundos irriget imbres !
 Huc, fœdat quos lepra, urit quos febris, adeste !
 Dia salutares spirant medicamina rami.
 Hic requies fessis ; non sacrâ sævit in umbrâ
Vis Boreæ gelida, aut rapidi violentia solis.

Irrita vanescent priscæ vestigia fraudis,
Justitiæque manus pretio intemerata bilancem
Attollet reducis ; bellis prætendet olivas
Compositis Pax alma suas, terrasque revisens
Sedatas niveo Virtus lucebit amictu.
Volvantur celeres anni ! Lux purpuret ortum
Expectata diu ! Naturæ claustra refringens
Nascere, magne puer ! Tibi primas, ecce ! corollas
Deproperat tellus, fundit tibi munera, quicquid
Carpit Arabs, hortis quicquid frondescit Eois.
Altius, en ! Lebanon gaudentia culmina tollit,
En ! summo exultant nutantes vertice silvæ.
Mittit aromaticas vallis Saronica nubes,
Et juga Carmeli recreant fragrantia cœlum.
Desertâ lætâ mollescunt aspera voce,
Auditur Deus ! ecce Deus ! reboantia circum
Saxa sonant Deus ; ecce Deus ! deflectitur æther
Demissumque Deum tellus capit ; ardua cedrus,
Gloria silvarum, dominum inclinata salutet !
Surgite convalles, tumidi subsidite montes !
Sternite saxa vium, rapidi discedite fluctus !
En ! quem turba diu cecinerunt enthea, vates,
En ! *Salvator* adest ; vultus agnoscite cæci
Divinos, surdas sacra vox permulceat aures !
Ille cutim spissam visus hebetare vetabit,
Reclusisque oculis infundet amabile lumen,
Obstrictasque diu linguas in carmina solvet.
Ille vias vocis pandet, flexusque liquentis
Hârmoniæ purgata novos mirabitur auris.
Accrescunt tremulis tactu nova robora nervis :
Consuetus fulcro innixus reptare bacilli
Jam saltu capreas, jam cursu provocat euros.

Non plactus, non merita sonant suspiria, pectus
Sanguis mœlet, lacrymantes terget ocellos.
Vincta coercebant lactantem adamantina mortem,
Æternoque orci dominator vulnere longæus
Invalidi raptos sceptri plorabit honores.
Ut quæ dulce strepent scatebræ, quæ læta virescunt
Pascua, quæ blandum spirat purissimus aer
Pastor agit pecudes, teneros modo suscipit agnos,
Et gremio fotis selectas porrigit herbas,
Amixtas modo quærit oves, revocatque vagantes;
Fidus adest custos, seu nox furat horrida nimbis,
Sive dies medius morientia torreat arva :
Postera sic pastor divinus sæcla beabit,
Et curas felix patrias testabitur orbis.
Non ultra infestis concurrent agmina signis,
Hostiles oculis flammæ jaculantia torvis ;
Non litui accendent bellum, non campus ahenis
Triste coruscabit radiis ; dabit hasta recusa
Vomerem, et in falcem rigidus curvabitur ensis.
Atria, pacis opus, surgent, finemque caduci
Natus ad optatum perducet cœpta parentis.
Qui duxit sulcos, illi teret area messem,
Et seræ textent vites umbracula proli.
Attoniti dumeta vident inculta coloni
Suave rubere rosis, sitientesque inter arenas
Garrula mirantur salientis murmura rivi.
Per saxa, ignivomi nuper spelæa draconis,
Canna viret, juncique tremit mutabilis umbra.
Horruit implexo quæ vallis sente, figuræ
Surgit amans abies teretis, buxique sequaces
Artificis frondent dextræ ; palmisque rubeta
Aspera, odoratæ cedunt mala gramina myrto.

Per valles sociata lupo lasciviet agna,
Cumque leone petet tutus præsepe jувencus.
Floreæ mansuetæ petulantes vincula tigris
Per ludum pueri injicient, et fessa colubri
Membra viatoris recreabunt frigore linguæ;
Serpentes teneris nil jam lethale micantes
Tractabit palmis infans, motusque trisulcæ
Ridebit linguæ innocuos, squamasque virentes
Aureaque admirans rutilantis fulgura cristæ.
Indue reginam, turritæ frontis honores
Tolle Salema sacros, quam circum gloria pennas
Explicat, incinctam radiatæ luce tiaræ!
En! formosa tibi porrecta per atria proles
Ordinibus surgit densis, vitamque requirit
Impatiens, lentèque fluentes increpat annos.
Ecce! peregrinis fervent tua limina turbis;
Barbarus, en! clarum divino lumine templum
Ingreditur, cultuque tuo mansuescere gaudet.
Cinnameos cumulos, Nabathæi munera veris,
Ecce! cremant genibus tritæ regalibus aræ.
Solis Ophyræis crudum tibi montibus aurum
Maturant radii, tibi balsama sudat Idume.
Ætheris, en! portas sacro fulgore micantes
Cælicolæ pandunt, torrentisque aurea lucis
Flumina prorumpunt; non posthac sole rubescet
India nascenti, placidæve argentea noctis
Luna vices revehet; radios pater ipse diei
Proferet archetypos; cælestis gaudia lucis
Ipso fonte bibes, quæ circumfusa beatam
Regiam inundabit, nullis cessura tenebris.
Littora deficiens arentia deseret æquor,
Sidera fumabunt, diro labefacta tremore

Saxa cadent, solidique liquescent robora montis :

Tu secura tamen confusa elementa videbis,

Lætaque Messia semper dominabere rege,

Pollicitis firmata Dei, stabilita ruinis.

O qui perpetuâ mundum ratione gubernas,

Terrarum cœlique sator !———

Disjice terrenæ nubulas et pondera molis,

Atque tuo splendore mica ! Tunamque serenum,

Tu requies tranquilla pïis. Te cernere finis,

Principium, rector, dux, semita, terminus, idem.

O Thou ! whose power o'er moving worlds presides,

Whose voice created, and whose wisdom guides,

On darkling man in pure effulgence shine,

And cheer the clouded mind with light divine.

'Tis thine alone to calm the pious breast,

With silent confidence and holy rest ;

From thee, great God ! we spring, to thee we bend;

Path, motive, guide, original, and end.

MISCELLANIES.

VERSES

*Addressed to Dr. Lawrence ; composed by Dr. Johnson,
as he lay confined with an inflamed Eye.*

SANGUINE dum tumido suffusus flagrat ocellus,
Deliciasque fugit solitas solitosque labores ;
Damnatus tenebris, lectoque affixus inertī,
Quid mecum peragam, quod tu doctissime posses
Laurenti saltem facili, dignarier aure ?
Humanæ mentis, rerum se pascere formis,
Est proprium, et quavis captare indagine verum,
Omnibus unus amor, non est modus unus amoris.
Sunt, qui curriculo timidi versantur in arcto,
Quos soli ducunt sensus, solus docet usus ;
Qui sibi sat sapiunt, contenti noscere quantum
Vel digiti tractant, oculus vel sentit et auris :
Tantundem est illis, repleat spatia ardua cœli
Materia, vastum an late pandatur inane. —
Scire vices ponti facile est, nihil amplius optant
Nec quærun't quid luna tuo cum fluctibus orbi.
Sic sibi diffusi, lenta experientia cursum
Qua sulcat, reptant tuti per lubrica vitæ.

Altera pars hominum, sanctæ rationis alumni
 Permissum credit, nullas sibi sistere causas ;
 Materiemque rudem, magnæque parentis addesse
 Conciliis, verique sacros recludere fontes.
 Gens illa, impatiens per singula quæque vagandi
 Tentat iter brevius, magno conamine summam
 Naturæ invadens, mundique elementa refigens
 Lævia serratis miscens, quadrata rotundis,
 Corpora cuncta suis gestit variare figuris.
 Particulasque locans certas certo ordine, pulchram
 Campagem edificat, cœlorum atque ætheris ignes.
 Accendit, rerumque modos ac fœdera ponit.
 Hi sunt, quos animi generosa insania magni
 In sublime rapit, queis terra et pontus et aer
 Sub pedibus subjecta jacent ; queis ultima primis
 Nexa patent ; hi sunt quos nil mirabile turbat
 Nil movet insolitum, sub legibus omnia fictis
 Dum statuunt, causisque audent præfigere metam.

THE NATURAL BEAUTY.

To Stella.

WHETHER Stella's eyes are found
 Fix'd on earth, or glancing round,
 If her face with pleasure glow,
 If she sigh at others' woe,
 If her easy air express
 Conscious worth, or soft distress,
 Stella's eyes, and air, and face,
 Charm with undiminish'd grace.

If on her we see display'd
Pendent gems, and rich brocade,
If her chintz with less expense
Flows in easy negligence ;
Still she lights the conscious flame,
Still her charms appear the same ;
If she strikes the vocal strings,
If she's silent, speaks, or sings ;
If she sit, or if she move,
Still we love, and still approve.

Vain the casual transient glance,
Which alone can please by chance,
Beauty, which depends on art,
Changing with the changing art,
Which demands the toilet's aid,
Pendent gems and rich brocade.
I those charms alone can prize,
Which from constant Nature rise,
Which nor circumstance, nor dress,
E'er can make, or more, or less.

STELLA IN MOURNING.

WHEN lately Stella's form display'd
The beauties of the gay brocade,
The nymphs, who found their power decline,
Proclaim'd her not so fair as fine.

'Fate ! snatch away the bright disguise,
And let the goddess trust her eyes.'
Thus blindly pray'd the fretful fair,
And fate malicious heard the prayer ;

Could Stella, sprightly, fair, and young,
 One moment hear the moral song,
 Instruction with her flowers might spring,
 And wisdom warble from her string.

Mark when from thousand mingled dyes
 Thou see'st one pleasing form arise,
 How active light, and thoughtful shade,
 In greater scenes each other aid.
 Mark when the different notes agree
 In friendly contrariety,
 How passion's well-accorded strife
 Gives all the harmony of life ;
 Thy pictures shall thy conduct frame,
 Consistent still, though not the same ;
 Thy music teach the nobler art,
 To tune the regulated heart.

TO MISS ———,

*On her giving the Author a gold and silk net-work
 Purse of her own weaving.*

THOUGH gold and silk their charms unite
 To make thy curious web delight,
 In vain the varied work would shine,
 If wrought by any hand but thine ;
 Thy hand that knows the subtler art,
 To weave those nets that catch the heart.

Spread out by me, the roving coin
 Thy nets may catch, but not confine ;

Nor can I hope thy silken chain
The glittering vagrants shall restrain.
Why, Stella, was it then decreed
The heart once caught should ne'er be freed?

TO A YOUNG LADY,

On her birth-day.*

THIS tributary verse receive, my fair,
Warm with an ardent lover's fondest prayer.
May this returning day forever find
Thy form more lovely, more adorn'd thy mind.
All pains, all cares, may favouring Heav'n remove,
All but the sweet solitudes of love!
May powerful nature join with grateful art,
To point each glance, and force it to the heart!
O then! when conquer'd crowds confess thy sway,
When e'en proud wealth and prouder wit obey,
My fair, be mindful of the mighty trust,
Alas! 'tis hard for beauty to be just.
Those sovereign charms with strictest care employ;
Nor give the generous pain, the worthless joy;
With his own form acquaint the forward fool,
Shown in the mimic glass of ridicule;
Teach mimic censure her own faults to find,
No more let coquettes to themselves be blind,
So shall Belinda's charms improve mankind.

*This was made almost impromptu, in the presence of Mr. Hector.

SONG.

Nor the soft sighs of vernal gales,
The fragrance of the flowery vales,
The murmurs of the crystal rill,
The vocal grove, the verdant hill ;
Not all their charms, though all unite,
Can touch my bosom with delight.

Not all the gems on India's shore,
Not all Peru's unbounded store,
Not all the power, nor all the fame,
That heroes, kings, or poets claim ;
Nor knowledge which the learn'd approve,
To form one wish my soul can move.

Yet Nature's charms allure my eyes,
And knowledge, wealth, and fame I prize ;
Fame, wealth, and knowledge I obtain,
Nor seek I Nature's charms in vain ?
In lovely Stella all combine,
And, lovely Stella ! thou art mine.

ON SEEING A BUST OF MRS. MONTAGUE.

HAD this fair figure, which this frame displays,
Adorn'd in Roman time the brightest days,
In every dome, in every sacred place,
Her statue would have breath'd an added grace,
And on its basis would have been enroll'd,
'This is Minerva, cast in Virtue's mould.'

TO LADY FIREBRACE.*

At Bury Assizes.

At length must Suffolk beauties shine in vain,
 So long renown'd in B——n's deathless strain?
 Thy charms at least, fair Firebrace, might inspire
 Some zealous bard to wake the sleeping lyre;
 For such thy beauteous mind and lovely face,
 Thou seem'st at once, bright nymph, a *Muse* and *Grace*.

 VERSES

*Written at the request of a Gentleman, to whom a Lady
 had given a Sprig of Myrtle.*

WHAT hopes, what terrors does this gift create?
 Ambiguous emblem of uncertain fate.
 The myrtle, (ensign of supreme command,
 Consign'd to Venus by Melissa's hand,)
 Not less capricious than a reigning fair,
 Oft favours, oft rejects a lover's prayer.

*This lady was Bridget, third daughter of Philip Bacon, Esq. of Ipswich, and relict of Philip Evers, Esq. of that town; she became the second wife of Sir Cordell Firebrace, the last Baronet of that name, (to whom she brought a fortune of 25,000l.) July 26, 1737. Being again left a widow in 1759, she was a third time married, April 7, 1762, to William Campbell, Esq. uncle to the present Duke of Argyle, and died July 3, 1782

In myrtle shades oft sings the happy swain,
In myrtle shades despairing ghosts complain.
The myrtle crowns the happy lovers' heads,
The unhappy lovers' graves the myrtle spreads.
Oh ! then the meaning of thy gift impart,
And ease the throbbings of an anxious heart.
Soon must this sprig, as you shall fix its doom,
Adorn Philander's head, or grace his tomb.

THE YOUNG AUTHOR.

WHEN first the peasant, long inclin'd to roam,
Forsakes his rural sports and peaceful home,
Pleas'd with the scene the smiling ocean yields,
He scorns the verdant meads and flowery fields ;
Then dances jocund o'er the watery way,
While the breeze whispers, and the streamers play.
Unbounded prospects in his bosom roll,
And future millions lift his rising soul ;
In blissful dreams he digs the golden mine,
And raptur'd sees the new-found ruby shine.
Joys insincere ! thick clouds invade the skies,
Loud roar the billows, high the waves arise ;
Sick'ning with fear, he longs to view the shore,
And vows to trust the faithless deep no more.
So the Young Author, panting after fame,
And the long honours of a lasting name,
Intrusts his happiness to human kind,
More false, more cruel, than the seas or wind.

'Toil on, dull crowd,' in ecstasies he cries,
'For wealth or title, perishable prize ;
While I those transitory blessings scorn,
Secure of praise from ages yet unborn.'
This thought once form'd, all counsel comes too late,
He flies to press, and hurries on his fate ;
Swiftly he sees th' imagin'd laurels spread,
And feels th' unfading wreath surround his head.
Warn'd by another's fate, vain youth, be wise,
Those dreams were Settle's once and Ogilby's !
The pamphlet spreads, incessant hisses rise,
To some retreat the baffled writer flies ;
Where no sour critics snarl, no sneers molest,
Safe from the tart lampoon, and stinging jest !
There begs of Heaven a less-distinguish'd lot,
Glad to be hid, and proud to be forgot.

TRANSLATION.

Of a Speech of Aquileio, in the Adriano of Metastasio,

Beginning, 'Tu che in Corte invecchiasti.'

GROWN old in courts, thou art not surely one
Who keeps the rigid rules of ancient honour ;
Well skill'd to soothe a foe with looks of kindness,
To sink the fatal precipice before him,
And then lament his fall with seeming friendship.

Open to all, true only to thyself,
 Thou know'st those arts which blast with envious praise,
 Which aggravate a fault with feign'd excuses,
 And drive discountenanc'd virtue from the throne ;
 That leave the blame of rigour to the prince,
 And of his every gift usurp the merit ;
 That hide in seeming zeal a wicked purpose,
 And only build upon another's ruin.

Let wit condemn'd the feeble war to wage,
With close malevolence, or public rage ;
Let study, worn with virtue's fruitless lore,
Behold this theatre, and grieve no more.
This night, distinguish'd by your smiles, shall tell,
That never Britain can in vain excel ;
The slighted arts futurity shall trust,
And rising ages hasten to be just.

At length our mighty bard's victorious lays
Fill the loud voice of universal praise ;
And baffled spite, with hopeless anguish dumb,
Yields to renown the centuries to come ;
With ardent haste, each candidate of fame
Ambitious catches at his towering name ;
He sees, and pitying sees, vain wealth bestow
Those pageant honours which he scorn'd below,
While crowds aloft the laureate bust behold,
Or trace his form on circulating gold.
Unknown—unheeded, long his offspring lay,
And want hung threatening o'er her slow decay.
What though she shine with no Miltonian fire,
No favouring muse her morning dreams inspire !
Yet softer claims the melting heart engage,
Her youth laborious, and her blameless age ;
Hers the mild merits of domestic life,
The patient sufferer, and the faithful wife.
Thus grac'd with humble virtue's native charms,
Her grandsire leaves her in Britannia's arms ;
Secure with peace, with competence to dwell,
While tutelary nations guard her cell.
Yours is the charge, ye fair, ye wise, ye brave !
'Tis yours to crown desert beyond the grave.

**TO GOLDSMITH'S COMEDY OF THE GOOD-
NATURED MAN. 1769.**

Press'd by the load of life, the weary mind
 Surveys the general toil of human kind,
 With cool submission joins the labouring train,
 And social sorrow loses half its pain ;
 Our anxious bard without complaint may share
 This bustling season's epidemic care :
 Like Cæsar's pilot dignified by Fate,
 Tost in one common storm with all the great ;
 Distrest alike the statesman and the wit,
 When one a borough courts, and one the pit.
 The busy candidates for power and fame
 Have hopes, and fears, and wishes just the same ;
 Disabled both to combat, or to fly,
 Must hear all taunts, and hear without reply.
 Uncheck'd on both, loud rabbles vent their rage,
 As mongrels bay the lion in a cage.
 Th' offended burgess hoards his angry tale,
 For that blest year when all that vote may rail ;
 Their schemes of spite the poet's foes dismiss,
 Till that glad night when all that hate may hiss.
 'This day the powder'd curls and golden coat,'
 Says swelling Crispin, 'begg'd a cobbler's vote ;'—
 'This night our wit,' the pert apprentice cries,
 'Lies at my feet ; I hiss him, and he dies.'
 The great, 'tis true, can charm th' electing tribe,
 The bard may supplicate, but cannot bribe.

Yet judg'd by those whose voices ne'er were sold
 He feels no want of ill-persuading gold;
 But confident of praise, if praise be due,
 Trusts without fear to merit and to you.

TO THE COMEDY OF THE WORD TO THE
 WISE.*

THIS night presents a play which public rage,
 Or right, or wrong, once hooted from the stage.†
 From zeal, or malice, now no more we dread,
 For English vengeance wars not with the dead.
 A generous foe regards with pitying eye
 The man whom fate has laid where all must lie.

To wit reviving from its author's dust,
 Be kind, ye judges, or at least be just.
 For no renew'd hostilities invade
 Th' oblivious grave's inviolable shade.
 Let one great payment every claim appease,
 And him who cannot hurt, allow to please;
 To please by scenes unconscious of offence,
 By harmless merriment, or useful sense.
 Where aught of bright or fair the piece displays,
 Approve it only—'tis too late to praise!

* Performed at the Covent-Garden Theatre for the benefit of Mrs. Kelly, widow of Hugh Kelly, Esq. (the author of the play) and her children, 1777.

† Upon the first representation of this play in 1770, it was damned from the violence of party.

If want of skill, or want of care appear,
 Forbear to hiss—the poet cannot hear !
 By all like him must praise and blame be found,
 At best a fleeting gleam, or empty sound.
 Yet then shall calm reflection bless the night,
 When liberal pity dignified delight ;
 When pleasure fir'd her torch at virtue's flame,
 And mirth was bounty with an humbler name.

EPILOGUE,

*Intended to have been Spoken by a Lady who was to
 personate the Ghost of Hermione.**

YE blooming train, who give despair or joy,
 Bless with a smile, or with a frown destroy ;
 In whose fair checks destructive Cupids wait,
 And with unerring shafts distribute fate ;
 Whose snowy breasts, whose animated eyes,
 Each youth admires, though each admirer dies :
 Whilst you deride their pangs in barbarous play,
 Unpitying see them weep and hear them pray,
 And unrelenting sport ten thousand lives away ;
 For you, ye fair, I quit the gloomy plains,
 Where sable night in all her horror reigns ;
 No fragrant bowers, no delightful glades
 Receive th' unhappy ghosts of scornful maids.

* Some young ladies at Litchfield having proposed to act
 'The Distressed Mother,' Johnson wrote this, and gave it to
 Mr. Hector to convey privately to them.

For kind, for tender nymphs, the myrtle blooms,
And weaves her bending boughs in pleasing glooms
Perennial roses deck each purple vale,
And scents ambrosial breathe in' every gale ;
Far hence are banish'd vapours, spleen, and tears,
Tea, scandal, ivory teeth, and languid airs ;
No pug, nor favourite Cupid there enjoys
The balmy kiss, for which poor Thyr sis dies ;
Form'd to delight, they use no foreign arms,
Nor torturing whalebones pinch them into charms ;
No conscious blushes there their cheeks inflame,
For those who feel no guilt can know no shame ;
Unfaded still their former charms they shew,
Around them pleasures wait, and joys forever new.
But cruel virgins meet severer fates ;
Expell'd and exil'd from the blissful seats,
To dismal realms, and regions void of peace,
Where furies ever howl, and serpents hiss.
O'er the sad plains perpetual tempests sigh ;
And pois'nous vapours, blackening all the sky,
With livid hue the fairest face o'ercast,
And every beauty withers at the blast :
Where'er they fly their lovers' ghosts pursue,
Inflicting all those ills which once they knew ;
Vexation, fury, jealousy, despair,
Vex every eye and every bosom tear ;
Their foul deformities by all descried,
No maid to flatter, and no paint to hide.
Then melt, ye fair, while crowds around you sigh,
Nor let disdain sit low'ring in your eye ;
With pity soften every awful grace,
And beauty smile auspicious in each face ;
To ease their pains exert your milder power,
So shall your guiltless reign, and all mankind adore.

BAGATELLES.

 LINES

*Written in ridicule of certain Poems published in
1777.**

WHERESOEVER I turn my view,
 All is strange, yet nothing new ;
 Endless labour all along,
 Endless labour to be wrong ;
 Phrase that time has flung away,
 Uncouth words in disarray,
 Trick'd in antique ruff and bonnet,
 Ode, and elegy, and sonnet.

 PARODY

Of a translation from the Medea of Euripides.

ERR shall they not, who resolute explore
 Times gloomy backward with judicious eyes ;
 And scanning right the practices of yore,
 Shall deem our hoar progenitors unwise.

* By Thomas Warton.

They to the dome where smoke with curling play
Announc'd the dinner to the regions round,
Summon'd the singer blythe, and harper gay,
And aided wine with dulcet streaming sound.

The better use of notes, or sweet or shrill,
By quivering string or modulated wind ;
Trumpet or lyre—to their harsh bosoms chill,
Admission ne'er had sought, or could not find.

Oh ! send them to the sullen mansions dun,
Her baleful eyes where sorrow rolls around ;
Where gloom-ennamour'd mischief loves to dwell,
And murder, all blood-bolter'd, schemes the wound.

When cates luxuriant pile the spacious dish,
And purple nectar glads the festive hour ;
The guest, without a want, without a wish,
Can yield no room to music's soothing power.

BURLESQUE

*Of the modern versifications of ancient Legendary
Tales.*

AN IMPROMPTU.

THE tender infant, meek and mild,
Fell down upon the stone ;
The nurse took up the squealing child,
But still the child squeal'd on.

TRANSLATION

*Of two Stanzas of the Song, 'Rio Verde, Rio Verde,'
printed in Percy's Reliques of ancient English Poetry.*

AN IMPROMPTU.

GLASSY water, glassy water,
Down whose current clear and strong,
Chiefs confus'd in mutual slaughter,
Moor and Christian roll'd along.

IMITATION OF THE STYLE OF ****.

'HERMIT hoar, in solemn cell
Wearing out life's evening grey ;
Strike thy bosom sage, and tell
What is bliss, and which the way !'—
Thus I spoke, and speaking sigh'd,
Scarce repress'd the starting tear,
When the hoary sage replied,—
'Come, my lad, and drink some beer.'

BURLESQUE

Of the following Lines of Lopez de Vega.

AN IMPROMPTU.

Sz acquien los leones vence
Vence una muger hermosa
O el de flaco averguence
O ella di ser mas furiosa.

If the man who turnips cries
 Cry not when his father dies,
 'Tis a proof that he had rather
 Have a turnip than his father.

TRANSLATION

*Of the following Lines at the end of Baretto's Easy
 Phrasology.*

AN IMPROMPTU.

VIVA viva la padrona,
 Tutta bella, e tutta buona,
 La padrona è un angiolella
 Tutta buona e tutta bella ;
 Tutta bella e tutta buona ;
 Viva ! viva la padrona !

Long may live my lovely Hetty !
 Always young and always pretty,
 Always pretty, always young,
 Live my lovely Hetty long !
 Always young and always pretty,
 Long may live my lovely Hetty !

IMPROVISO TRANSLATION

*Of the following Distich on the Duke of Modena's
 running away from the Comet, in 1742 or 1748.*

SE al venir vostro i principi se n' vanno
 Deh venga ogni dì — durate un anno.

If at your coming princes disappear.
 Comets ! come every day—and stay a year.

IMPROVISO TRANSLATION

Of the following Lines of Mons. Benserade A Son Lit.

THEATRE des ris, et des pleurs,
Lit ! ou je nais, et ou je meurs,
Tu nous fais voir comment voisins,
Sont nos plaisirs, et nos chagrins.

In bed we laugh, in bed we cry,
And born in bed, in bed we die ;
The near approach a bed may show
Of human bliss to human woe.



TRANSLATION

Of the following Lines written under a Print representing Persons skating.

Sur un mince crystal l'hyver conduit leurs pas
Le precipice est sous la glace ;
Telle est de nos plaisirs la legere surface,
Glissez mortels ; n' appuyez pas.

O'er ice the rapid skaiter flies,
With sport above and death below ;
Where mischief lurks in gay disguise,
Thus lightly touch and quickly go.

IMPROMPTU TRANSLATION

Of the same.

O'er crackling ice, o'er gulfs profound,
 With nimble glide the skaiters play;
 O'er treacherous pleasure's flowery ground
 Thus lightly skim, and haste away.

TO A LADY.*

Who spoke in defence of Liberty.

LIBER ut esse velim, suasisti, pulchra Maria,
 Ut maneam liber, pulchra Maria, vale.

AD LAURAM PARITURAM EPIGRAMMA.†

ANGLIACUS inter pulcherrima Laura puellas,
 Mox uteri pondus depositura grave,
 Adsit, Laura, tibi facilis Lucina dolenti,
 Neve tibi noceat prænituisse Deæ.

* Miss Molly Aston.

† Mr. Hector was present when this Epigram was made impromptu. The first line was proposed by Dr. James, and Johnson was called upon by the company to finish it, which he instantly did.

EPIGRAM

On George II. and Colley Cibber, Esq. Poet Laureate.

AUGUSTUS still survives in Maro's strain,
And Spenser's verse prolongs Eliza's reign,
Great George's acts let tuneful Cibber sing;
For nature form'd the Poet for the King.

TO MRS. THRALE,

On her completing her Thirty-fifth Year.

AN IMPROMPTU.

OFT in danger, yet alive,
We are come to thirty-five ;
Long may better years arrive,
Better years than thirty-five.
Could philosophers contrive
Life to stop, at thirty-five,
Time his hours should never drive
O'er the bounds of thirty-five.
High to soar, and deep to drive,
Nature gives at thirty-five.
Ladies, stock and tend your hive,
Trifle not at thirty-five ;
For, howe'er we boast and strive,
Life declines from thirty-five :
He that ever hopes to strive
Must begin by thirty-five ;
And all who wisely wish to wive,
Must look on Thrale at thirty-five.

IMPROMPTU

*On hearing Miss Thrale consulting with a Friend about
a Gown and Hat she was inclined to wear.*

WEAR the gown, and wear the hat,
Snatch thy pleasures while they last ;
Hadst thou nine lives, like a cat,
Soon those nine lives would be past.

IMPROMPTU TRANSLATION

*Of an Air in the Clemenza de Tito of Metastasio,
beginning, 'Deh se Piacermi vuoi.*

WOULD you hope to gain my heart,
Bid your teasing doubts depart ;
He who blindly trusts, will find
Faith from every generous mind :
He who still expects deceit,
Only teaches how to cheat.

TO LYCE,

An elderly Lady.

YE nymphs whom starry rays invest,
By flattering poets given,
Who shine, by lavish lovers drest,
In all the pomp of heaven.

Engross not all the beams on high,
Which gild a lover's lays,
But as your sister of the sky,
Let Lyce share the praise.

Her silver locks display the moon,
Her brows a cloudy show,
Striped rainbows round her eyes are seen,
And showers from either flow,

Her teeth the night with darkness dyes,
She's starr'd with pimples o'er ;
Her tongue like nimble lightning plies,
And can with thunder roar.

But some Zelinda while I sing,
Deny my Lyce shines ;
And all the pens of Cupid's wing
Attack my gentle lines.

Yet spite of fair Zelinda's eye,
And all her bards express,
My Lyce makes as good a sky,
And I but flatter less.

TRANSLATIONS.**PART OF THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN
HECTOR AND ANDROMACHE;**

From the Sixth Book of Homer's Iliad.

SHE ceas'd : then godlike Hector answer'd kind,
(His various plumage sporting in the wind,)
' That post and all the rest shall be my care ;
But shall I then forsake th' unfinish'd war ?
How would the Trojans brand great Hector's name !
And one base action sully all my fame,
Acquir'd by wounds, and battles bravely fought !
Oh ! how my soul abhors so mean a thought.
Long have I learn'd to slight this feeble breath,
And view with cheerful eyes approaching death.
The inexorable sisters have decreed
That Priam's house and Priam's self shall bleed.
The day shall come, in which proud Troy shall yield,
And spread its smoking ruins o'er the field.
Yet Hecuba's, nor Priam's hoary age,
Whose blood shall quench some Grecian's thirsty rage,
Nor my brave brothers, that have bit the ground,
Their souls dismiss'd through many a ghastly wound,
Can in my bosom half that grief create,
As the sad thought of your impending fate ;

When some proud Grecian dame shall tasks impose,
Mimic your tears, and ridicule your woes ;
Beneath Hyberia's waters shall you sweat,
And, fainting, scarce support the liquid weight.
Then shall come Argive loud insulting cry,
' Behold the wife of Hector, guard of Troy !'
Tears, at my name, shall drown those beauteous eyes,
And that fair bosom heave with rising sighs !
Before that day, by some brave hero's hand,
May I lie slain, and spurn the bloody sand !'

HORACE.

BOOK I. ODE 22.

THE man, my friend, whose conscious heart
With Virtue's sacred ardour glows,
Nor taints with death th' envenom'd dart,
Nor needs the guard of Moorish bows.
Though Scythia's icy cliffs he treads,
Or horrid Afric's faithless sands ;
Or where the fam'd Hydaspes spreads
His liquid wealth o'er barbarous lands.
For while by Chloe's image charm'd,
Too far in Sabine woods I stray'd ;
Me singing, careless and unarm'd,
A grisly wolf surpris'd, and fled.
No savage more portentous stain'd
Apulia's spacious wilds with gore ;
None fiercer Juba's thirsty land,
Dire nurse of raging lions, bore.

Place me where no soft summer gale
Among the quivering branches sighs ;
Where clouds condens'd forever veil
With horrid gloom the frowning skies.

Place me beneath the burning line,
A clime deny'd to human race ;
I'll sing of Chloe's charms divine,
Her heav'nly voice, and beauteous face.

HORACE.

BOOK II. ODE 9.

CLOUDS do not always veil the skies,
Nor showers immerse the verdant plain ;
Nor do the billows always rise,
Or storms afflict the ruffled main.

Nor, Valgius, on the Armenian shores
Do the chain'd waters always freeze ;
Not always furious Boreas roars,
Or bends with violent force the trees.

But you are ever drown'd in tears,
For Mystes dead you ever mourn ;
No setting Sol can ease your care,
But find you sad at his return.

The wise, experienc'd Grecian sage
Mourn'd not Antilochus so long ;
Nor did king Priam's hoary age
So much lament his slaughter'd son.

Leave off, at length, these woman's sighs,
 Augustus' number'd trophies sing ;
 Repeat that prince's victories,
 To whom all nations tribute bring.

Nipates rolls an humbler wave,
 At length the undaunted Scythian yields,
 Content to live the Roman's slave,
 And scarce forsakes his native fields.

HORACE.

BOOK IV. ODE 7.

THE snow dissolv'd, no more is seen ;
 The fields and woods, behold ! are green,
 The changing year renews the plain,
 The rivers know their banks again,
 The sprightly nymph and naked grace
 The mazy dance together trace.
 The changing year's successive plan
 Proclaims mortality to man.
 Rough winter's blasts to spring give way,
 Spring yields to summer's sovereign ray ;
 Then summer sinks in autumn's reign,
 And winter chills the world again.
 Her losses soon the moon supplies,
 But wretched man, when once he lies
 Where Priam and his sons are laid,
 Is nought but ashes and a shade.
 Who knows if Jove, who counts our score,
 Will toss us in a morning more ?

What with your friend you nobly share,
At least, you rescue from your heir.
Not you, Torquatus, boast of Rome,
When Minos once has fix'd your doom,
Or eloquence, or splendid birth,
Or virtue, shall restore to earth.
Hippolytus, unjustly slain,
Diana calls to life in vain ;
Nor can the might of Theseus rend
The chains of hell, that hold his friend.
Nov. 1784.

VIRGIL.—PASTORAL I.

MELIBŒUS.

Now, Tityrus, you supine and careless laid,
Play on your pipe beneath this beechen shade ;
While wretched we about the world must roam,
And leave our pleasing fields and native home,
Here at your ease you sing your amorous flame,
And the wood rings with Amaryllis' name.

TITYRUS.

Those blessings, friend, a deity bestow'd,
For I shall never think him less than God ;
Oft on his altar shall my firstlings lie,
Their blood the consecrated stones shall dye ;
He gave my flocks to graze the flowery meads,
And me to tune at ease the unequal reeds.

MELIBŒUS.

My admiration only I express'd,
 (No spark of envy harbours in my breast,)
 That when confusion o'er the country reigns,
 To you alone this happy state remains.
 Here I, though faint myself, must drive my goats,
 Far from their ancient fields and humble cots.
 This scarce I lead, who left on yonder rock
 Two tender kids, the hopes of all the flock.
 Had we not been perverse and careless grown,
 This dire event by omens were foreshown;
 Our trees were blasted by the thunder-stroke,
 And left-hand crows, from an old hollow oak,
 Foretold the coming evil by their dismal croak.

ANACREON.

ODE IX.

LOVELY courier of the sky,
 Whence and whither dost thou fly?
 Scattering, as thy pinions play,
 Liquid fragrance all the way:
 Is it business? Is it love?
 Tell me, tell me, gentle dove.
 'Soft Anacreon's vows I bear,
 Vows to Myrtale the fair;
 Grac'd with all that charms the heart,
 Blushing nature, smiling art.
 Venus, courted by an ode,
 On the bard her dove bestow'd.

Vested with a master's right,
Now Anacreon rules my flight ;
His the letters that you see,
Weighty charge, consign'd to me.
Think not yet my service hard, \
Joyless task without reward ;
Smiling at my master's gates,
Freedom my return awaits ;
But the liberal grant in vain
Tempts me to be wild again.
Can a prudent dove decline
Blissful bondage, such as mine ?
Over hills and fields to roam,
Fortune's guest without a home ;
Under leaves to hide one's head,
Slightly shelter'd, coarsely fed.
Now my better lot bestows
Sweet repast, and soft repose ;
Now the generous bowl I sip,
As it leaves Anacreon's lip.
Void of care, and free from dread,
From his fingers snatch his bread ;
Then with luscious plenty gay,
Round his chamber dance and play ;
Or from wine as courage springs,
O'er his face extend my wings ;
And when feast and frolic tire,
Drop asleep upon his lyre.
This is all, be quick and go,
More than all thou canst not know ;
Let me now my pinions ply ;
I have chatter'd like a pyc.'

FROM BOETHIUS.

De Consolatione Philosophiæ.

BOOK II. METRE 2.

THOUGH countless as the grains of sand
That roll at Eurus' loud command ;
Though countless as the lamps of night
That clad us with vicarious light ;
Fair Plenty, gracious queen, should pour
The blessings of a golden shower,
Not all the gifts of Fate combin'd
Would ease the hunger of the mind,
But swallowing all the mighty store,
Rapacity would call for more ;
For still where wishes most abound
Unquench'd the thirst of gain is found ;
In vain the shining gifts are sent,
For none are rich without content.

BOOK II. METRE 4.

WOULDST thou to some steadfast seat,
Out of Fortune's power retreat ?
Wouldst thou, when fierce Eurus blows,
Calmly rest in safe repose ?
Wouldst thou see the foaming main,
Tossing rave, but rave in vain ?

Shun the mountain's airy brow,
Shun the sea-sapp'd sand below ;
Soon the aspiring fabric falls,
When loud Auster shakes her walls,
Soon the treach'rous sands retreat,
From beneath the cumb'rous weight.
Fix not where the tempting height
Mingles danger with delight ;
Safe upon the rocky ground,
Firm and low thy mansion found ;
There, 'mid tempest's loudest roars,
Dashing waves and shatter'd shores,
Thou shalt sit and smile to see
All the world afraid but thee,
Lead a long and peaceful age,
And deride their utmost rage.

BOOK III. METRE 5.

THE man who pants for ample sway,
Must bid his passions all obey ;
Must bid each wild desire be still,
Nor yoke his reason with his will ;
For though beneath thy haughty brow
Warm India's supple sons should bow,
Though northern climes confess thy sway,
Which erst in frost and freedom lay,
If Sorrow pine, or Avarice crave,
Bow down and own thyself a slave.

PARAPHRASE OF PROVERBS.

*Chap. vi. Verses 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.***'Go to the Ant, thou sluggard!'**

TURN on the prudent ant thy heedful eyes,
 Observe her labours, sluggard! and be wise.
 No stern command, no monitory voice
 Prescribes her duties, or directs her choice;
 Yet, timely provident, she hastes away,
 To snatch the blessings of the plenteous day;
 When fruitful summer loads the teeming plain,
 She crops the harvest, and she stores the grain.

How long shall Sloth usurp thy useless hours,
 Unnerve thy vigour, and enchain thy powers?
 While artful shades thy downy couch enclose,
 And soft solicitation courts repose.
 Amidst the drowsy charms of dull delight,
 Year chases year with unremitted flight,
 Till Want now following, fraudulent and slow,
 Shall spring to seize thee like an ambush'd foe.

ON THE DEATH OF DR. ROBERT LEVET.

CONDEMN'D to Hope's delusive mine,
 As on we toil from day to day,
 By sudden biasts or slow decline,
 Our social comforts drop away.

Well tried through many a varying year,
 See Levett to the grave descend,

Officious, innocent, sincere,
Of every friendless name the friend.
Yet still he fills affection's eye,
Obscurely wise and coarsely kind ;
Nor, letter'd arrogance, deny
Thy praise to merit unrefin'd.
When fainting nature call'd for aid,
And hovering death prepar'd the blow,
His vigorous remedy display'd
The power of art without the show.
In misery's darkest cavern known,
His useful care was ever nigh,
Where hopeless anguish pour'd his groan,
And lonely want retir'd to die.
No summons mock'd by chill'd delay,
No petty gain disdain'd by pride ;
The modest wants of every day
The toil of every day supplied.
His virtues walk'd their narrow round,
Nor made a pause, nor left a void ;
And sure the Eternal Master found
The single talent well employ'd.
The busy day, the peaceful night,
Unfelt, uncounted, glided by ;
His frame was firm, his powers were bright,
Though now his *eightieth* year was nigh.
Then with no fiery, throbbing pain,
No cold gradations of decay,
Death broke at once the vital chain,
And forc'd his soul the nearest way.

EPITAPHS.

ON SIR THOMAS HANMER, BART.

THOU who survey'st these walls with curious eye,
Pause at this tomb where Hanmer's ashes lie ;
His various worth through varied life attend,
And learn his virtues while thou mourn'st his end.

His force of genius burn'd in early youth,
With thirst of knowledge, and with love of truth ;
His learning, join'd with each endearing art,
Charm'd every ear, and gain'd on every heart.

Thus early wise, the endanger'd realm to aid,
His country call'd him from the studious shade ;
In life's first bloom his public toils began,
At once commenc'd the senator and man.

In business dext'rous, weighty in debate,
Thrice ten long years he labour'd for the state ;
In every speech persuasive wisdom flow'd,
In every act refulgent virtue glow'd ;
Suspended faction ceas'd from rage and strife,
To hear his eloquence, and praise his life.

Resistless merit fix'd the senate's choice,
Who hail'd him Speaker with united voice.
Illustrious age ! how bright thy glories shone,
When Hanmer fill'd the chair, and Anne the throne !

Then when dark arts obscur'd each fierce debate,
When mutual frauds perplex'd the maze of state,
The Moderator firmly mild appear'd—
Beheld with love—with veneration heard.

This task perform'd, he sought no gainful post,
Nor wish'd to glitter at his country's cost ;
Strict on the right he fix'd his steadfast eye,
With temperate zeal, and wise anxiety ;
Nor e'er from Virtue's paths was lur'd aside,
To pluck the flowers of pleasure or of pride.
Her gifts despis'd, Corruption blush'd and fled,
And fame pursued him where Conviction led.

Age call'd, at length, his active mind to rest,
With honour sated, and with cares oppress'd ;
To letter'd ease retir'd and honest mirth,
To rural grandeur and domestic worth ;
Delighted still to please mankind, or mend,
The patriot's fire yet sparkled in the friend.

Calm Conscience then, his former life survey'd,
And recollected toils endear'd the shade,
Till Nature call'd him to the general doom,
And Virtue's sorrow dignified his tomb.

ON CLAUDE PHILLIPS.

*An itinerant Musician.**

PHILLIPS ! whose touch harmonious could remove
The pangs of guilty power, and hapless love,

*Phillips was a travelling fiddler up and down Wales, and greatly celebrated for his performance.

Rest here, distrest by poverty no more,
Find here that calm thou gav'st so oft before ;
Sleep undisturb'd within this peaceful shrine,
Till angels wake thee with a note like thine.

FOR HOGARTH.

THE hand of him here torpid lies,
That drew the essential form of grace ;
Here clos'd in death the attentive eyes,
That saw the manners in the face.

FINIS.





